


Memoirs of
J. W. KLIEWER

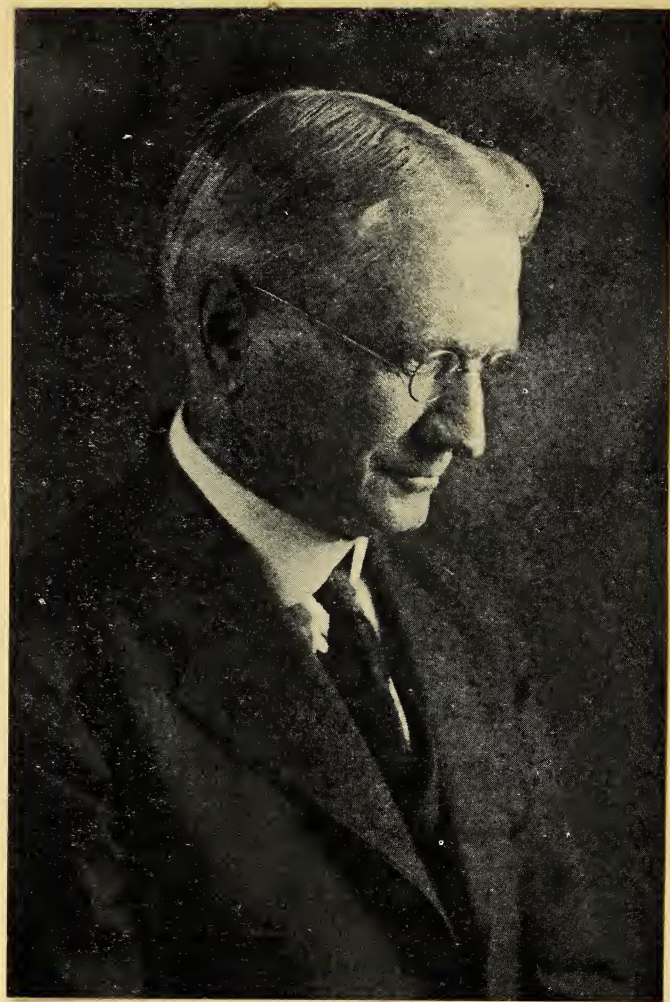
Bethel College





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MEMOIRS OF J. W. KLIEWER



Memoirs of
J. W. KLIEWER

or

From Herdboy to College President



Published by
Bethel College, North Newton, Kansas

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DEDICATION

This volume is respectfully dedicated
to Bethel College

J. W. Kliewer

INTRODUCTION

It is always worthwhile for any generation to preserve a record of the lives of its leaders. During the last half century Dr. J. W. Kliewer has been one of the outstanding leaders of the Mennonite Church in general and of Bethel College in particular. In this volume is presented the story of his life in interesting autobiographical fashion. His many friends will want copies of this book and will be helped and inspired by the reading of its pages.

It was only upon repeated urging on the part of friends that Dr. Kliewer wrote this autobiography. After he had written it, he not only dedicated it to Bethel College but also presented it to the school. Dr. and Mrs. Kliewer have always been greatly concerned about the perpetuation and upbuilding of the institution with which they have been connected in some capacity or another ever since their student days. Dr. Kliewer has kindly consented to have the school use the manuscript in memory of its donor and for the benefit of Bethel College by selling the book at ten dollars a copy, all of which is to be added to the College Endowment Fund to establish the DR. AND MRS. J. W. KLIEWER MEMORIAL CHAIR OF PEACE AND MISSIONS.

Dr. Kliewer completed the notes for this volume, as his Preface indicates, shortly before his death. Since then Dr. P. H. Richert, a long time co-worker with Dr. Kliewer and a friend of Bethel College, has kindly made the sale of this book his special task.

Introduction

Friends of Bethel College will be grateful for this record of the life of one who lived so nobly and struggled so bravely as a man of God. As time adds perspective, the strong Christian personality and the far reaching contributions of Dr. Kliewer will increasingly be appreciated by the Mennonite Church. Bethel College is grateful for this volume which will be welcomed by Christian friends everywhere.

Ed. G. Kaufman

PREFACE

Memoirs are supposed to be written from memory and without much formality. The latter requirement I can easily meet; the former, however, is somewhat difficult. About three years ago I suffered a stroke of paralysis which, although it was of a mild type, left my memory somewhat impaired. Nevertheless, friends have encouraged me to undertake the task of writing my memoirs and have offered help in typing these notations. I undertake this effort in the consciousness that a recurrence of the stroke may terminate the work before its completion, but this thought shall not thwart my good cheer. I am in God's hand.

J. W. Kliewer

March, 1935

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CHAPTER I

BACKGROUND

Ancestry.—My forebears lived in Holland, having migrated there from Switzerland in the time of William of Orange even before the Reformation. Because they had become experts in drainage projects of the submerged lands in Holland, an opportunity for livelihood opened along the Vistula in Northeastern Prussia. A settlement was made in Danzig, a free city.

Family Names.—Even today the family name, Kliwer, is common among the residents of Danzig. Kliwers have been among the church leaders for over two centuries. Jakob Kliwer II became minister of the Danzig Mennonite Church on May 14, 1897. The name (pronounced as though spelled “cleaver”) seems to have been derived from *Kleawer* (*Kleber*), which means “a paster,” and may indicate that my ancestors were connected with the book-binder’s trade.

From my mother’s side we were Foths (pronounced as though spelled “foat”). In Mennonite circles today, the name is sometimes spelled “Voth.” The Foths have been identified with commercial pursuits for many years. Quite recently, Johannes Foth headed the Bankers’ Association of Danzig. The name has the American cognate meaning “foot.”

The Chief Mennonite Characteristic.—Though the Mennonite settlers of Danzig had a useful occupation, they were not cordially welcome. They were “foreigners” and spoke a language different from that spoken by inhabitants of Danzig; besides, they did not fit into the scheme of the Lutheran church, then dominant in that city. Natural birth enters the Lutheran into church connection. With the Mennonites, as with all other Anabaptists, a second birth is required to enter the ecclesiastical fold. But the chief Mennonite characteristic was their attitude of non-violence. Men with such convictions did not make good soldiers. The general conception was that they were not desirable citizens. This erroneous conclusion was based on the assumption that citizens should engage in the destructive work of the soldier, in preference to the constructive work of the average citizen. Merely an inactive position on this point did not long remain satisfactory.

Language Problems in Danzig.—There was an urgent desire to impart such convictions to others, but the lack of an adequate knowledge of the language of the land soon became apparent. A group of foreign-speaking people would, before long, be forced to acquire the language of the land if it were to exert any missionary influence. The opportunity for the influences that can be connected with the Mennonite faith has been much retarded because of the repeated language changes, necessitated by the repeated migrations. These migrations called for shifts in language from Swiss to Dutch, Dutch to German, German to Russian, and Russian to English (in America). The loss sustained by such migration did not consist exclusively in the lack of a con-

tinuity of a particular type of spiritual influence, but also in the lack of contagion by contact made possible through a common language medium. It was, therefore, a sign of progressive outlook into the future when the Danzig Mennonite Church decided to use the German language instead of the Dutch. Had the change never been made, the Mennonite influence would of necessity have been restricted to Holland. Would Russia probably have been saved from lapsing into chaos if our religious tenets had not been couched in a language foreign to the populace? In a modified form, the same question will apply to America and Spanish America in a later day.

Maybe, to save our religion, we shall have to sacrifice our language, dear as it may be to our hearts. Such sacrifice is ancient experience. Hebrew was replaced by Greek, and both of these languages, in turn, by the translated languages of the Bible. Sometimes the poorer language has taken place of the richer; and we today, too, may have to be willing to suffer such replacement. The change may be painful, but when God's clock strikes, we must be ready to hear, or we will suffer loss. In Danzig, however, adherence to the language had been retained long enough to cause a break of sympathy between the two language groups. As a retaliatory measure the indigenous group opposed things advocated by the strangers, blocking progress in business and professions, just as it has been done in Germany to the Jews of today. Our fathers, in this case the strangers, were not supposed, without special permission, to enter the different types of business; nor could they own property. Consequently, at the begin-

ning of the eighteenth century, because of the many barriers that had been erected to an economic progress, they were forced to leave Danzig.

Removal to Polish Russia.—Again the Mennonite reputation for thrift swung the doors of opportunity open to our forefathers. Towards the close of the eighteenth century Czarina Katherine, the Empress of Russia, invited them to develop the steppes of Russia and make them habitable. The invitation was gratefully accepted, and subsequently the Danzig Mennonites migrated to the promising land of Russia.

The Klievers and Foths settled in the good farming region of Polish Russia in the proximity of the Holy City of Kiev. The other nearest place of any size was Berditchev. The settlement used the German language and retained many earmarks of German village life. It was the oldest Mennonite settlement in Russia, established early in 1780. There was only one family on an individual farm, other settlers lived in villages.

Climate and soil made a rustic comfort possible. Economically, the settlement had possibilities. Labor was reasonably cheap and thus available to the new settlers. Markets, though somewhat limited, were within reach, where they could dispose of small grains, meats, hides, and wools.

Polish and Russian Culture.—Socially, our people were not thrown into a desert. The Polish people, into whose contact we were thrown, were more refined than the average Mushik. The women, for instance, were of a more comely appearance than the Russian women. The Polish were of a nearly vanished nobility, but they had not become degenerated. This was really more

than could be said of the Russian families in our neighborhood. These were, on the whole, more coarse. It is true, we were thrown into contact more with them than with the Polish through our servants, who were Russian. But social contact seemed to be limited both with the Polish and with the Russian neighbors. I have often wondered whether the troubles of 1920 and later would have developed if we had not been so selfishly careful about social contact and would, therefore, have been able to exert more of a moderating influence. The statement about lack of contact is not to be interpreted as though there had been no social contact at all. There was; but such contact never permitted the consciousness to be submerged that our folks and the Russian servants, who lived in the same house with us, were of two different classes. The servants were never admitted to the same table with us, nor was the same food served them.

The democracy that is taken for granted in the average American community was foreign to the Mennonite settlement in Russia. At least, that was true in our community. Yet on special occasions the fellow-feeling could not be suppressed. On New Year's Day, for instance, the servants would come into our house early for "wishing," a visible evidence consisting of the casting of grain into the assembled family and the repeating of words of well-wishing for the year. It seemed to have the same significance as the American "ricing" of newly-married couples.

Some Early Memories.—Among our own group there were occasions for social contacts in connection with special events of the non-social kind. Outstand-

ing to my childish mind was the early-winter butchering. It was designated as a "hog wedding." Unfortunately, *vodka* (Russian for "strong drink") played a prominent part in all social or semi-social events. I am reminded in connection with one of these butcherings, that the German teacher of the Mennonite school became maudlingly intoxicated. He was not a Mennonite but a member of another denomination. One of my sisters reported later that in his intoxicated state he offered to kiss the older girls. It seems to me that our fathers sacrificed too much in pedagogy, possibly, for the retention of the German language.

My memory does not bring back any definitely religious reminders of our church life. The likelihood is that we children hardly ever attended church services. Mother's personal maid was too convenient a person with whom to leave the children while the parents went to church. It is not likely that the inability to recall any religious influence of the Sabbath Day is to be explained solely by the lapse of memory.

I have very definite evidence that my memory reaches back to the age of three years. At that age I attended the wedding of my Aunt Lena, from my mother's side, who was married to my Uncle Heinrich Schmidt. I remembered how startled I was that my Auntie should sit with her hand in a man's hand. I suppose that my surprise was caused by the intuition of a child's mind that that was "not proper." By repeated verifications by older members of the family, proof has been offered me that I was only a little past three years old when this event took place. This is the first impression I can locate in my memory. Two years later we left our

European home for America, and I can, therefore, not remember much in detail of the events of my childhood, either of a religious type or of any other, that could be connected with Russia.

The Polish Jew.—While still in Russia, there was another class of people that was placed into our sphere of contact. This was that of the Polish Jew. At stated times each year, Polish Jews who follow the tailor's trade would come into our house to measure the men and boys for suits, which they would then tailor. At another time, men of the same class who plied the boot-and-shoemaker's trade would come and prepare our footwear. At other times, Jews would seine for fish in our pond and keep a share of their catch. This frequent mingling with this, to us, a strange people, gave us an opportunity to observe their ways at first-hand and at close range. That, of course, brought some of their religious practices into our home. The use of straps in their prayers invited me to an imitation of their prayer ritual. I appropriated a leather strap of father's. After winding the strap around my arm and mockingly repeating some of their prayers, I felt the strap jerked out of my hand and applied upon me by my father in a most stinging way. When I complained of this treatment to my father, he replied to me that any religious exercises, however poorly understood by me, were to be considered seriously and were not to be ridiculed.

New Religious Experiences.—The next teaching of the same import was given me by my mother after we had moved to America into a sod house near the schoolhouse where the Sunday services were being held.

A Methodist exhorter was at the services for the purpose of conducting them for English-speaking hearers. His appearance was quite crude. The Mennonite settlers had learned to look with suspicion on new experiences. The suspicion was followed by ridicule. A group of our men, after they had listened for a while to the exhorter, turned from him with some ridicule of his crudities. I was a ready learner and imitated them. My mother, though she never had a class in pedagogy, intuitively felt that ridicule was wrong. She called me to her side and emphasized the truth that we could only suffer spiritual loss if we mocked or made light of any religious exercises foreign to our own. I have often been grateful for this advice of Mother's when I was forced to get along with people of quite different viewpoints. Mother was called to her heavenly home when I was only eight years old, but this particular lesson she taught me has lingered on to help me fit myself into new situations.

Our little group—Mennonites, Russians, Poles, Jews—got along in surprising harmony. No clashes developed on national or racial lines. A sort of patriarchal regime prevailed.

The Servant Problem.—Alluding to the fact that the life among these different nationalities as it was lived in our home in Polish Russia was a very happy and contented one, I am a bit afraid that such a statement might lead to the thought that there were no differences of opinion or of ideals. That would be suggesting greater harmony than was true because I remember very definitely that the boxing of the ears of the hired help was not unusual. Not only were the ears of the cowherd

boxed and those of the boy who attended to the heating of the building, but also those of men and women, and I have often wondered whether some of the feeling of resentment which showed itself afterward in the time of the revolution may not have had its origin in that kind of treatment. But these very people sometimes stood up in defense of the good name of our parents, although they did it in a very crude way. I recall how one of our hired men gave another Russian a downright beating because he dared to make slighting remarks, not about Father or Mother, but about a horse that belonged to Father. Yet this very man, who had defended the good name of Father's property, somewhat later stole Father's most valuable horse.

A Mennonite man who had married a Mennonite girl had started his own household and lived with his newly-found wife in a small house in the pasture part of our farm. The man helped Father on the farm; his wife helped Mother with the housework. The man became blind and his condition offered my parents an opportunity to help him. Both he and his wife remained very fond of our parents and of us children. They kept up this attachment even after we had migrated from Europe and had settled in Kansas.

Other hired men employed by Father were two full-time men—Russians—to do the field work and to help with the stock in winter. Father also employed a boy as cowherd, whose winter duty became that of heating the home by putting bundles of straw into the stove for several hours each day. The heater was constructed of a hard clay substance and placed so that it would heat all the living rooms of the house. As the

smoke was escaping through the chimney, it cured the meat, consisting of sausages, hams, sides of bacon, and other similar products.

Mother had the assistance of two Russian girls and a maid to help with us children. Besides preparing the meals and keeping the house clean, I recollect that there was an abundance of work with the milk, butter, cheese, the pouring of our own tallow candles, and other duties. There seems to have been no absolute division of labor. During the time of haying, women helped with the raking of the hay after the men had done the mowing with the scythe.

No definite salary scale prevailed. A fairly comfortable, but by no means luxurious, sustenance seems to have been the norm. A hired man was given about thirty rubles a year in cash as his wage, besides the most necessary articles of clothing, a very ordinary fare of food, and a room between the house and the barn under the same roof, where he could sleep.

The house in which we lived was a long, thatched-roof affair. In the main part of this the family lived; next the servants had their sleeping quarters; then there was a place for the mangle and the washed clothes; beyond this there was a threshing floor; and finally there were the horse and the cow stables. The last-named were kept scrupulously clean. Any offensive odors were thus removed quite a distance from the living quarters.

Happy Surroundings.—I am depending upon my memory of impressions made over half a century ago. The details of facts, therefore, may not check up properly. My memory conjures up a happy childhood life,

spent in a rustic kind of comfort. It is but natural that the rigors of the severe Russian winters have left no impression on me. I was likely never exposed to them. Only a faint memory recalls the ride in a sleigh to which a team of three horses was hitched. The middle horse had a sleigh bell. The road was smooth and rounded in the middle by packed snow. Sheepskin coats kept us snug and warm. Such a picture is brought back to my memory. However, I sometimes even wonder whether all of these details are stored away in my memory, or whether they are furnished by pictures that I have seen or descriptions that I have read and that have been embellished by my imagination.

Do I really remember the stork on the thatched roof, and did we really call him *Klapperstorch*, because of the clapping noise made by his bill? Did the women really sing in a sort of mournful tune while raking hay, a tune similar to the "spirituals" of our American negroes? Did the nightingale sing night away and daylight into existence while dawn lingered reluctantly on? Did the cuckoo really startle us by calling at unexpected times and places? Was there a specially fine taste to the honey gathered by bees in our own flowered meadow and from our orchard trees? Was the milk and cream from our cows, not to be had by stinting measure of pint and quart but by the pail, really better than in these later years?

Ominous Threats.—Was this life in Russia all but a pleasant dream to vanish with the morning and be turned into a nightmare? Ominous thunders foretold the approaching of a new, but terrible, day. It was to be fraught with disappointments. The life of a

warless existence, based upon the promise of the Czarina and her counselors, threatened to be dashed to pieces again and her imperial promise to be exempt from military service was about to be withdrawn. A suppressed agitation started in the thoughts of many Mennonite settlements in Russia.

The leaders of the church soon cast about for a place to which to emigrate. Attention was called to America as a possible place of escape. The leaders of the church chose a group of men to visit America to investigate conditions and to report their findings. In time these reports reached our group also, and the majority voted for emigration. That involved the disposing of property at a great or even almost total loss. But liberty of conscience was to be preserved, no matter what the cost.

Leave-Taking.—I was a few months past five years old when we bade good-bye to our home and started for America, the land but very imperfectly known by any of our group. The parting pangs of leave-taking were but partially allayed by the hopes for a future not very perfectly known or dreamed. The time of tearful farewells arrived. What sacrifices were made for a conviction! Over all Russia the events were repeated. For many, however, it was a sacrifice that seemed an impossibility. Many Mennonites did not leave Russia at that time. For them a terrible suffering awaited when the revolution broke half a century later.

CHAPTER II

PIONEER YEARS IN AMERICA

Voyage and Arrival.—Going through Germany in the autumn of 1874, we embarked from Antwerp in Belgium on the vessel “Nederland.” It was a vessel partly propelled by sail, I think, and partly by steam. That does not mean that it proceeded with double speed. To all of our members this was the first ocean trip. Seasickness, with the incident discomforts, visited most of us. I, personally, however, did not suffer unusually much from the malady. I proved a good sailor then as I did on subsequent voyages on different seas. The ship’s physician showed special kindness to me, possibly because I demanded but little professional attention and was, therefore, generally in a jovial mood. Two experiences of the voyage made an indelible impression on my memory. One was a storm at sea, and the other was a fire in the hold of the ship. Both of these experiences drove many into prayer and work.

Before we landed, we could see a train along the shore. Distance made the train seem diminutive. My childish worry made me wonder how we could stand upright in such a low train. Over the memory of the bustling and hurrying, incident to landing in a country

of a new language, more than half a century has drawn the veil. Of the journey by train from Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, to Peabody, Kansas, only one incident remains in my mind. When the train passed through a tunnel, I used the temporary darkness to scare my little sister by crying, "Wolf! Wolf!" to her. I remember Mother's gentle but firm grip. Why should memory not bring back a more poetic incident to be cherished for future years!

Our family, that is, the Klievers and Foths, and a few others left the train at Peabody, Kansas, instead of going on to Newton—we called it "Neffton." Those of us who stepped off at Peabody rented a modest home, while those who went on to Newton were housed in a temporary "immigrant house" until another temporary immigrant home could be erected some dozen miles north of Newton.

Learning English.—By living in a small settlement of immigrants, some of the inconveniences were avoided that came to the larger group. Of course, in other instances the opposite was the result. Those of us who did not contact the German—or Plattdeutsch—speaking persons undoubtedly had a better opportunity to acquire the English language. Of course, at times one has been corrected for mistakes that he did not make, merely because he was under suspicion since he was "Dutch."

An incident comes to my mind that illustrates this. After I had begun to teach in the public schools of Halstead, Kansas, a discussion arose one day in a place of business as to the identity of a certain person. I stepped out into the street and said, "I think it is he." The business man remarked, "You claim to be a public

school teacher; why don't you speak English as others do? Whoever heard of anyone saying, 'It is he'? Why don't you say, 'It is him'?" Being a foreigner, I was expected to make the mistakes of the natives. Early in my effort to acquire the English, I had proof that expressions under taboo have often been acquired unintentionally. "Cuss words" are remembered before they are understood because they are emphatically spoken and therefore lodged in the memory, while more exemplary sentiments are more easily forgotten because they are too tamely put.

I also remember an incident of this sort in my early linguistic efforts. I was sent to a near-by store to make a small purchase. I think it was one of matches. A small coin was put into my hand with instructions to point to the coin and then say, "Matches." To make sure I would remember, I was instructed to repeat the word "matches" on the way to the store. A group of boys stopped me as I was passing the schoolhouse. Finally I tried to pass on. Whether it was my foreign garb or some other cause, one of the boys gave me the parting "Damn Dutch." That emphatically uttered expression stayed, and the word "matches" had to make room for it. The clerk at the store was very much startled when I handed the coin to him and said, "Damn Dutch." Needless to say, I brought home no matches from the store, but that was by no means the last time I heard the expression, "Damn Dutch."

The German Language.—I have remarked before that we brought the German language along from Europe. In a way, the German language made it more difficult to acquire the English language. I think even

the Low German is more closely akin to the English than the High German. The word "Low German" is really a *misnomer*. In the German it is called *Plattdeutsch*, which means "German of the level country." *Hochdeutsch* means "German of the high country." It is not, therefore, true that the *hoch* stands higher than the *platt* as far as merits are concerned. Of course, when that outstanding piece of literature, the translation of the Bible, came out, it came out in the language of the *high* country and not of the *platt* country.

Nevertheless, a person who speaks German and studies English finds similarities between the Low German and the English. In illustration of that contention, one might allude to the fact that where the German words end in *b* or *p* sound, as in *halb* and *Kalb*, the English has its *half* and *calf*. The Low German has *halb* for *half* and *Kalf* for *calf*, and the peculiar similarity goes on by making the plural of words ending in *f* and in *v*. *Half* changes to *halves*, and *calf* changes to *calves*, and the same thing holds true about the Low German. *Halb* changes to *halve*, *Kalf* to *Kalve*, and *Wolf* to *Wilve*. This similarity proved a help to us when we were learning the language.

We struck a difficulty in our Low German, however, when we tried to learn the Low German as it was spoken by others; as for instance, by the Polish *Plattdeutsch*. Where we said *dot* for the word *that*, the others said *dowt*. When we tried to say the word *what*, we said *vot*; others said *vowt*. We found that for us as much of an adjustment was necessary to this Low German as was necessary to the English. Then we discovered that some words had slipped into the

Low German which were possibly of French origin. For instance, for *color* the *Plattdeutsch* had *coloe'er* which, I think, has the indications of being French in origin.

Later we were also thrown into contact with people who were not Low German but *Bayerisch*. Mrs. Kliewer spoke *Bayerisch* in her home. I recall that, while in school at Halstead, some of the Low German people tried to poke fun at the *Bayerisch*. Of course, I had to stop that later when I became interested in and finally married Miss Emma Ruth, who was a *Bayerisch* girl.

The Food Problem.—Our new settlers were subjected to hardships of a new kind. They had come here from a homeland which was blessed with fruit, berries, honey, milk, and cheese, but were compelled to settle in very bleak surroundings. The life that they led was indeed a cheerless one. Prairie fires gave a weird illumination at night. As these fires swept down on our home by sudden gusts of wind, night birds would be attracted by them, often dropping into the flames when they were exhausted, and the singed feathers of the birds and the singed hair of rabbits and coyotes became quite nauseating to our sense of smell. I often wondered at the very few discouraging remarks that came from the lips of Father and Mother.

Mother's Prayer.—Of course, we children were too young to realize the difference that had come over us, but I remember one night, after I had been put to bed and had slept, I overheard Mother uttering an audible prayer. In that prayer she asked God to give them fortitude to carry on. She said that they had taken this step to save the boys—there were three of

us—from military service, which might have meant a place in the Cossack ranks. I must say that that prayer made a deep impression on me. The thought that our parents had done so much for us boys did not leave me.

Grasshoppers.—The conditions were made worse by the grasshoppers that were a visitation in Kansas. At times the sky became almost darkened by the hoards of these pests. Every green blade was destroyed. Corn that was in the husk was eaten by the grasshoppers to the very cob. Of course, the hoppers were killed after some little time by an early frost; but they had deposited their eggs, and months later they were hatched out and became a new menace to the crop in the following year.

Droughts.—In addition to this retarding influence, droughts set in and hindered the growth of the new seed that had been planted. We were fortunate that all of us learned to eat the different products of corn, although we had not been used to that at all in the old country. We were all fond of mush in its various forms and of “johnnycake” and of pop corn. Father made a cheap contrivance of a trap, which gave us rabbit and prairie chicken to eat. And in season we used corn on the cob. I recall how another Mennonite settler remarked to Father one time when Father asked him whether they had had any roasting ears, “Why do you think that a German would eat corn?” These early settlers spoke of themselves as “Germans” not as “Russians,” although we had come directly from Russia and Poland.

Herding Cattle.—Because of the financial sacrifices that my parents had to bring when they left for America from Russia, we were all put into rather straitened con-

ditions, and quite early we children had to help in making both ends meet. When I was eleven or twelve years old, I was given an opportunity to herd cattle in Butler County. The cattle were brought from the different farmers in the neighborhood and put into one herd. In this way, they were kept through the summer, then got back to their respective owners again for the winter. After the different groups of cattle had become accustomed to each other, it was quite a task to get them separated. I rode a pony, whereas the farmers who owned the smaller different herds had to ride on their big horses. Naturally, I could accomplish more with my pony than they could with their horses, for the pony was accustomed to the task of driving cattle and was quicker on foot. For that reason, I thought myself quite a hero in the group of men.

The herd which I had in charge was brought together by Mr. Gerhard Claassen, who was a son-in-law of Rev. Leonhard Sudermann, one of the men that the Mennonite churches had sent to America to investigate settling possibilities here. He has since published a small book entitled *Eine Deputationsreise von Russland nach Amerika*. I, of course, had no idea at that time that he was a man of such importance. Maybe if I had known it, I would not have acted as independently as I did. But undoubtedly I had imbibed some of the spirit of independence characteristic of youth, while Reverend Suderman had carried over some of the European spirit of superiority over younger folks.

I came into closer contact with Mr. Claassen in later years, in a somewhat indirect way. Mr. Claassen, accompanied by the Honorable Peter Jansen of Beatrice,

Nebraska, and my brother-in-law, Mr. Frank Ewert, went to Canada on a tour of investigation to determine whether it would be profitable to buy some of the Canadian prairie land. I had interested my brother-in-law, Mr. Ewert, in the project after I came back from Canada and gave a description of what I thought were possibilities there. Unfortunately, Mr. Claassen became sick of typhoid fever on the trip and succumbed to that disease.

About the same time that I worked as herdsman for Mr. Claassen, I also herded for a man by the name of Penner. He was an old man, suffering from asthma, and was, therefore, not in very robust health. I recall that in the fall of the year he engaged a private teacher to teach his three grown sons. I was also given the opportunity to take part in these classes.

After leaving the work of herding for Mr. Claassen, I took up the same type of work with a Mr. Melvin Haas, whose father was Professor of Speech in the University of Kansas at Lawrence. As I remember it now, my duties extended into the winter season. I herded cattle in the corn stalks, while the snow covered the ground. I very likely had no school opportunities that winter.

A Threshing Hand.—In subsequent years I started working with a threshing machine of the old horse-power type. My job consisted of driving the horses hitched to the horse power. Later on, after I had taken up teaching as a profession, I often spent my summers working at a threshing machine. Steam power soon replaced horse power. Often I spent all of my summer vacation working at the threshing machine. The con-

trast from no physical labor to very intensive labor was too great, and I sometimes feel that it had an undermining influence as far as my health is concerned, especially because we did not harden our bodies in those days by a systematic program of exercise.

CHAPTER III

GETTING AN EDUCATION

First School.—Before we had been in America very long, we moved from the town of Peabody to the country north of town, where we rented a small farm. Prospects were none too rosy, but my parents sent me to school, nevertheless. Unfortunately, the teacher did not possess sufficient ingenuity to begin even the rudiments of the English language with us. I recall only one thing that I learned by observation while at school here, and Mother saw to it that I unlearned that with all speed. After the noon lunch, the children would burn the remnants of bread and other articles of food. Mother was horrified at such sacrilege. She argued that bread was a gift of God. If we had no need of it, we could feed it to the hungry birds. I do not remember that in the years of plenty of corn, we ever burned it as fuel. Mother, if she had lived in the years of overproduction, would have proved a poor exponent of the policy to destroy food.

Early Teachers.—We came into a better school possibility when we moved from Marion County to Harvey County. A “little slip of a schoolma’am” proved to be a rising light in our school life. She took delight

in teaching us the things we did not know. It was a pleasure to wrestle with the stubborn sounds until they were mastered. To give us a chance to laugh at her expense, as she had laughed at ours, she would ask us to have her pronounce some hard German words. The parents instructed us to have her try *zwiebeln* and *zweiundzwanzig*. She had learned a little German when she knew she was going to teach among German people, and she used to delight our parents by telling the story of an American who traveled in Germany and saw a train advertised as a *Gueterzug*. He argued that if *gut* means *good*, *Gueter* might mean *better*, and so he took this train. To his dismay he found it to be a freight train.

Later we had an Englishman as a teacher in our school. He was none too friendly towards us Dutch and tried to twit us with our mistakes. Later he taught in a neighboring district, but often he appeared on our literary programs. He took part in a "spelling-down" match. I spelled correctly the word on which he went down and kept the floor as the last one. I think the word was "separate." He spelled it "seperate." I took great pride in defeating a man who was not friendly to our group. The pleasure of "scholarly" accomplishments induced the desire in me for further efforts along this line.

Difficulties.—Later on, while attending public school in the country, I struck a certain difficulty on which I had not figured. I was making my home temporarily with my sister, Mrs. Frank Ewert, who had kept house for my father some time after the death of my mother. The board, whose names I have forgotten, and against

whom I bear no ill will, informed me that, since I was not really at home, I was not entitled to go to school there because the place was very much overcrowded. That compelled me to seek for school opportunity in the city of Newton. Fortunately, I was able to find a place where I could work for my room and board.

A New Vision.—About that time a new era had begun in my school experiences. A cousin of mine and I had gotten the *Wanderlust*. I had saved a little money, my cousin had also, so we decided to go to the western coast. I was attending the wedding of another cousin of mine and there told Rev. G. N. Harms, our pastor, of my intention. He took me aside, near a tree that subsequently became known as the “lone tree,” and argued with me that my money would mean more if I would spend it for school than if I would spend it for a trip like that. He said that one of the boys of the neighborhood was going to the Halstead Seminary and that he was sure I could find opportunity to go with him. His argument with me prevailed, and the next week both of us reported in Halstead as students of the Academy. My cousin who had planned to go with me to the Pacific Coast went there and wasted his money and has led a somewhat profligate life since. I feel, therefore, that the Reverend Harms may have saved me from the same fate.

Garrett Biblical Institute.—After my study at the Halstead Seminary, I decided to attend a Bible school. My eye was on the Moody Bible School, and I went there to enroll. However, I had previously spent some time teaching and had learned to think independently. Soon it was clear to me that the Moody School method

fettered independent thinking, and so I enrolled in the Garrett Biblical Institute at Evanston, Illinois. From this institution I was graduated with the Bachelor of Sacred Theology degree and by the same institution was subsequently granted an honorary Doctor of Divinity degree. A friend of mine offered to see me through financially if I would attend a European university. I hesitated to accept, because such help would obligate me not only financially but morally as well.

The atmosphere at Garrett did a great deal to liberate my mind, which, after all, had tended to be cramped. Dr. C. J. Little, president of the school, shaped my thinking considerably. He was a person who had a dramatic way of putting things. I recall how, one time when he was lecturing, one of the students spoke up and said, "Dr. Little, I agree with you." Dr. Little, rising from his seat (for he usually sat when he taught), stopped in front of that student and shook his fist in his face and said, "You can't agree with me. You are too young. You have not agonized in prayer and thought enough to agree with me!" The young man felt quite nonplussed, but I have never forgotten those words, and very likely the young man hasn't, nor have the other members of the class.

When I first met Dr. Little and told him that I was a Mennonite, I tried to explain to him that we were like the Methodists in being Armenian in our doctrine; we were like the Congregationalists in our church polity; we were like the Baptists in our emphasis on adult baptism. He called to his wife and with a twinkle in his eyes said, "Let me introduce you to this brother. He isn't quite a Methodist; he isn't quite a Congregation-

alist; and he isn't quite a Baptist." Mrs. Little was German, and, incidentally, I might say that I often spoke German to her. However, she did not always prefer to speak German because, she said, she wanted to perfect her English. Dr. Little spoke German to her for the same reason that she spoke English to him.

Another man who made a lasting impression on me was Dr. D. A. Hayes, the teacher of New Testament Greek, who died in June, 1936. I asked him one time, when I found out that he was a pacifist, how he had come to take that position. He said, "My dear brother, do you think a man can teach New Testament for all these years that I have taught it and not be interested in the peace principles of the gospel?"

Before Dr. Hayes was called to the Position of New Testament in Garrett, that chair was occupied by Dr. Bradley. He called me into his study several times and wanted to know for what the Mennonites stood. Speaking about the matter of baptism, I told him that we did not practice infant baptism but waited for the children to have their own convictions and preferences in the matter. I told him further that as far as the form of baptism was concerned, although we usually practiced pouring, we had no one form exclusively, but that in many cases it was left to the applicant. He replied, "Well, it seems to me that you have Scripture and common sense on your side." I made bold to answer, "Dr. Bradley, if we have Scripture and common sense on our side, what is left for you?" He took the rejoinder very good-naturedly.

Another teacher, Dr. Terry, who had the chair of Doctrinal Theology, had been reared in the Quaker

Church and possibly found the Methodist polity a little cumbersome. He dropped the remark one time, with reference to the Methodist Church, "It might be said that there is too much harness for the horse."

The man from whom I took my Hebrew was Dr. Horswell. My inward criticism of his work was that he dwelt too much on subjects of higher criticism and did not teach us enough Hebrew. I found, however, that he was very lenient to any one who dared to think differently from him, if he thought at all. I recall that in his lectures on the Pentateuch he tried to establish the contention that the Pentateuch was of non-Mosaic origin. I recall that in my report on his lecture, I made the comment that it could be established as well that the Constitution of the United States did not originate in the United States Congress. I feared this comment might lower me in his estimation. In the next class meeting he took occasion to chastise with considerable severity those men who had in a somewhat flippant way alluded to the Mosaic origin of the Pentateuch, and he spoke with considerable appreciation of my honest endeavor to defend this theory.

Courses not exclusively Biblical, such as sociology, missions, and others, proved very helpful to me. The course in sociology gave me an opportunity to make some first-hand study of case histories. I was assigned to Hull House where Jane Addams labored, and to the Chicago Commons, where Grayham Taylor worked. At both of these places I gathered data and reported my findings to the class. I got a wealth of information from my study of a certain Children's Home. Visits in various city missions gave me a fund of illustrative

material for future use in the pulpit or on the platform.

Observing Dowie's Work.—Acquainting myself at first hand with some movements that had gone astray may also have helped to equip me for some of my future work by helping me to evaluate human experiences properly. The "Zion" movement of John Alexander Dowie belongs in this class. Once, while visiting with various friends in Berne, Indiana, I was fairly besieged by questions of what I thought of Dowie. I had to confess that I was too busy looking into things of proved worth and, therefore, had taken no time to study things of questionable value. But I determined to look into this movement upon my return to Chicago. On my first visit to "Zion" I went with a medical friend and a minister of Mennonite faith to help me keep my balance when Dowie indulged in his pet phrase of ridicule, "doctors, drugs, and devils," and when he tried to prove that all denominations were of satanic origin and would ere long yield to "Zion," the only true and orthodox faith. Later I attended Dowie's meetings often. I was present when he made the dramatic announcement to an awed crowd that he was "Elijah II." Immediately the breathless silence of the crowd broke into bedlamic shouts. I was soon convinced that Dowie was a mountebank. This contact has, however, later helped me better to understand people who have gone daft on faith healing, or other extreme religious teachings.

CHAPTER IV

IN THE MINISTRY

Various Opportunities.—Before Prof. H. H. Ewert had been made Assistant Commissioner of Education for the Mennonites in Canada, I had spent a year doing supervised teaching under him while he was still in Kansas. Upon completion of my course at Halstead, he arranged for me to come to Canada and again take up teaching. The loss of a letter in the mails frustrated those plans, and I took another position here in the States.

Some time before entering Garrett in August, 1893, I had a letter from Christian Krehbiel, suggesting that I come back to Halstead and try to revive and then head the Halstead School, which was closed when Bethel College was opened. I could not interest myself in the venture, which would have meant a continuation of an old school policy disagreement. About the same time, I was approached by an offer to follow Rev. J. B. Baer as an itinerant minister, appointed by the Home Mission Board of the General Conference. Then the Publication Board of the General Conference, or members of it, solicited my interest to become the editor of the

Mennonite. I did not accept the position but later, when Reverend Allebach fell sick, I edited this periodical for a brief time. These various openings show what a lamentable dearth of workers there was among our people.

The Pastorate at Wadsworth, Ohio.—In 1901 I received a call to the pastorate of the Mennonite Church at Wadsworth, Ohio. This place appealed to me, since it seemed to give time for me to grow into something for which I was not yet ready. The Sunday after my graduation from Garrett, I was in the Wadsworth pulpit, a successor to the Rev. N. C. Hirschy. The Wadsworth Church had enjoyed being in the center of Mennonite interests for a number of years, because the conference school was located there, and a number of times the General Conference had its sessions there.

It was at one of these sessions that the contact between the General Conference of the Mennonite Church and the newly-arrived immigrants from Russia had been made. The older members of the local church spoke with a great deal of admiration of the early conference men from the West, such as: Heinrich Richert, Dietrich Gaeddert, and Leonhard Sudermann. But the younger members found it somewhat difficult to keep up any denominational enthusiasm, although the founder of the local church, Ephraim Hunsberger, was one of the leaders of the conference. Among the younger members I found but little warm interest for the church, though definite admiration for Father Hunsberger and his conciliatory ways. Several circumstances accounted for this lack of interest. The church had probably waited too long before calling as successor a younger

man. Also the church remained in the country too long. It should have followed its members earlier to a location closer to town.

In the Wadsworth Church I had occasion to learn to know the Pennsylvania Dutch members which constitute so large a part of our Mennonite churches in the eastern states. I had no difficulty in understanding their German because it is a mixture of German and English and the proportions of each language used seems largely a matter of *ad libitum*. I conceived the thought that possibly these Pennsylvania Germans would welcome a German sermon for the older folks; consequently, I gave them a sermon in German. The deacon told me afterward that I spoke "Deutsch." He said I should have used "Deutsch Schwetzen." I must say I was never invited to speak German again.

The Wadsworth School.—The Mennonite school at Wadsworth, Ohio, was opened in 1868 and closed again in 1878. Although it was of short duration and of a somewhat European type, it nevertheless exerted a very wholesome influence on the life of the Mennonite denomination. The first missionaries, publication workers, ministers, and other church leaders were all trained there. But the local church, for reasons cited above, remained more or less uninfluenced by the school. It was no easy matter to translate non-American ways into American life and make them thrive.

Finding a Life Companion.—At the time of my Wadsworth pastorate, I came to Halstead, Kansas, to take with me as my bride, Miss Emma Ruth. My acquaintance with Miss Ruth had been one of rather long standing. I had taught in the district school to

which district her family belonged and had often called at her home. I had been a fellow student with her at the Halstead Seminary and later on also at Bethel College.

Often, when I've talked to young people about marriage, I have made the statement that really a young man should not only fall in love with the girl that he is to marry, but he should also have admiration for her whole family. I can truthfully say that I learned to admire Mr. J. W. Ruth of Halstead, Kansas, the father of my wife. I admired him for the time and the effort he was willing to give in serving his church as deacon. For several years the church was without a pastor, and it became the duty of the deacons to look for pulpit supply. Mr. Ruth derived a great deal of satisfaction from the fact that during his time as deacon he had never failed to provide for a minister in the pulpit. Much of that spirit to serve and sacrifice was inherited by his daughter.

At one of the calls to Mrs. Kliever's home before she was my wife, I for the first time saw her suffer with a headache of the migraine type, a malady of much distress and pain and one which she was destined to endure throughout life. However, in spite of this malady, she labored on heroically, and her example of service, coupled with her cultured mind, endeared her to many, especially to our young people. She was musically gifted, being skilled both in playing the piano and in singing. Any musical abilities that our children have inherited they must have from their mother, although from my side of the house there are also such as are musically inclined.

The Pastorate at Berne, Indiana.—Our stay in

Wadsworth was but brief, since I received a call to the pastorate of the Mennonite Church at Berne, Indiana. In 1903, I stepped into the new position with considerable fear and trembling. To become the pastor of a church of nearly a thousand members was quite a venture after the limited experience I had had, but the retired pastor, Rev. S. F. Sprunger, proved an excellent and unselfish adviser. Rev. I. A. Sommer, the editor of *Christlicher Bundesbote*, proved to be an unobtrusive and faithful inspiration. Mr. J. F. Lehman, the business manager of the Mennonite Book Concern, was a counselor whose advice was often and gladly sought. He became the superintendent of our Sunday School soon after my arrival there. He was a member of the State Sunday School organization and was subsequently made a member of the International Sunday School organization. He was a man of more than usual caliber. Another man of outstanding ability and vigor in our church was Fred Rohrer, then editor of the *Berne Witness* and author of the book, *The Saloon Fight in Berne, Indiana*, to which book Governor Frank Hanley wrote the introduction.

Building a Church.—The Berne Church was and is today one of the leading Mennonite churches in the country. I had been in this church a number of times and had become acquainted with the members before my call to the place came. I recall that I was surprised, when I visited there, at the meager equipment as far as the building and its seating accommodations were concerned. One of the first problems that awaited me, therefore, was the agitation for a new building.

Several times I presented the question of whether

or not this problem should be put on the agenda for the church to consider, and it was voted down. Finally, it was decided that the question should have a place on the program of the next annual church meeting. When it was brought up at that meeting and discussed, health considerations, favorable to a new church, were argued; yet quite a division of sentiment was evident. I said, as chairman, I would advise that they take sufficient time to examine the matter, and that a motion to build should not be made until a considerable time had been taken for discussion, thought, and prayer.

I recall how a robust man, who did not usually speak in meetings, encouraged folks to get up and speak against the proposition, even calling on people by name, asking them to get up and oppose it. Finally it was decided that the vote be taken. The motion to build a new structure carried by a comparatively small majority. I asked the question whether we would let those build the church who had voted for the building and excuse those who had voted against it. The same man who had encouraged others to vote against it, arose again and said, "No, that is not the way we do it here. The majority voted for it. Call on me, and I will give a thousand dollars for it." Another man who had also been reluctant in voting for it said, "Yes, call on me also, and I will give the second thousand." I told the men that I felt their willingness to sacrifice was an answer to prayer.

A committee was elected and went to work, soliciting support and making plans. All members of the church, with the exception of about half a dozen, gave liberally towards the building. Six months before the

building was begun, all the donations, over \$65,000, had been pledged, and on the day of dedication, to which I returned from Bethel College, there was no debt on the church—instead of that, an offering amounting to three thousand dollars was received for mission purposes. I have often used this experience when I have tried to encourage others to give for the Lord's cause.

Liberality of the Berne Church.—The Berne Church has always been known as a very liberal giver, especially for mission purposes. The reports of the mission gifts of this church have usually left the impression that it is very well to do. This, however, is not the case. There are more poor people in this church than well-to-do people, but many of the members tithe their incomes and so always have some money ready for special purposes.

The liberality of the church in the gifts for mission purposes became quite a standing argument on the part of other pastors when they wanted to make an appeal in their churches. I recall, however, that those appeals didn't always work out as anticipated. At one time I was present at the dedication of another church. The pastor spoke of the mission gifts of the Berne Church. We had, shortly before that, collected a thousand dollars for foreign missions. At the lunch, which was served in the church, he tried to get me to pose as an example of our church as liberal mission givers. He turned to one of his deacons, sitting across the table from me and having a chance to look me in the eye, and asked, "Well, Uncle John, what do you think of that?" The deacon replied, "Oh, I think the Berne people have gone crazy." I assured him that none of our members had been

sent to the insane asylum on account of liberal giving.

I recall at one of the services I spoke about the orphan girls in our mission fields and what help the missionaries could render them. After the services a young woman came to me and handed me a gift of money, which I should send to missions. She said, "I remember that I was an orphan girl, but instead of being neglected like the girls in the mission field, I was taken into a fine Christian home, and I received Christian care and nurture. I feel now that I must express my gratitude by leaving an offering for mission work. "

One time, when I was in my study, a farmer came to see me. He seemed to feel a little embarrassed about something and needed my encouragement to speak about the matter that had brought him into my study. He got out a roll of bills, which, when I counted them, proved to be one hundred dollars, and said, "I want to leave this for missions."

"Well," I said, "my dear brother, that's a very fine gift. If you don't mind, tell me why you are giving one hundred dollars for missions." He said he did it because his hogs had brought him a better price than he had expected.

The same man came back the next year and again brought a roll of paper money and said it was to be for missions. I jokingly asked him whether his hogs had brought a better price again than he had expected. When the money was counted, it was one hundred thirty dollars. "But this time," he said, "I am giving a mission gift for a different reason. You know I used to be a poor man in Switzerland. My family and I came to

this country seven years ago. We ventured out, aided by relatives who advanced the money, and bought a place, and we have been able to make good payments on it every year. The other night I was talking to my wife about it, and we spoke of the fine chance we have of giving our children a schooling. We realized the fact that if we had stayed in Switzerland, we would not have property as we have now. My oldest boy took first prize in a spelling contest, and all these things have made us grateful for the blessings that have been ours. We are giving this money for missions as a thank offering."

One time after church services a man stopped me before I left the church and gave me one hundred eighty dollars and said it was for missions. He reported further that a man who had been owing him these one hundred eighty dollars had not been paying, but after he attended our revival meetings he came and paid. "I had promised the Lord before that if the man ever paid me, that money should go to the mission cause."

An Awakening.—Some little time after I had taken up the pastorate in Berne, the consciousness was growing on me that I was not accomplishing what I should. Possibly that fear came from a sort of inferiority complex. I had undertaken to be pastor of a church that was outstanding in our denomination, and it had previously been served by a man who was of unusual experience and efficiency. I do not know how my church members became acquainted with my feeling. I may even have mentioned it from the pulpit some time, but a group of my members agreed that every Sunday morning, before they started on their way to church, they

would gather for a meeting to spend some time definitely praying for God's blessing on the church, and especially upon the work of the minister.

I was not told of these meetings, but before long, I became conscious of the stirring of the Spirit among our members. It began among the young folks. A Sunday School class came to me and informed me that they were desirous of a more consecrated spiritual life. Soon after that, members of my catechism class came with the same request. At a Christian Endeavor meeting, which was held on alternate Sunday nights (the other Sunday nights being given to preaching services) the same desire was voiced. The leader of the Christian Endeavor meeting on that particular night was Mr. J. F. Lehman, who had a wonderful way of influencing young people of our church. A number of people gave expression to the desire of a more consecrated spiritual life.

It happened that just at that time fire broke out in town, and the fire bell rang. Quite a number of our young men belonged to the fire company of our town. We had only a volunteer company, and they were under obligation to leave at once. The people in the meeting didn't know where the fire might be. Each one had to think of his own home and figured with the possibility that it was on fire. But in spite of that, the meeting was not entirely broken up. I slipped to Mr. Lehman, the leader, and said it was not right to ask anybody to stay under the circumstances. We would dismiss the meeting and would announce that it would continue the next evening.

It happened that Mr. Lehman and I were com-

pelled to leave that same night for Bluffton, Ohio, where we were to spend the following week at the annual auditing of the books of Bluffton College. The meeting on Monday night was, therefore put into the hands of somebody else, and we had no dearth of possible leaders. After each evening meeting, I was called by telephone at Bluffton and informed about the progress of the meetings. When Mr. Lehman and I came back Friday night, we found that the meetings had been going on without interruption, and the desire was to keep them up. So we met every evening for three weeks, and on certain days we would also have day meetings. All these meetings were more or less impromptu because we had not planned for them at all. Usually a passage of Scripture was read, and rather informal comments were made on it. The congregation united in song and prayer. Time was given for testimonies. The meetings were of a quiet but serious type. Encouragement was given for intercessions.

I am reminded of the family of a physician in town, who had been served by a man as coachman. This man was away in the Philippine Islands, having left the family in Berne, and one member of the family suggested that they pray for him. The family agreed that they would do that. In a few months they had word from the man that he had been seized by intense concern for his soul and had experienced conversion at about the time of our meetings.

The members of the family asked me whether they could believe that their former coachman was saved by their prayers. I said, "Why not? We do not know what influence there is of spirit over spirit, and it seems

our united prayers exerted an influence on your coachman in the Philippine Islands."

A spirit of intercession, which was followed by a spirit of forgiveness, was noticeable in the meetings. I recall that one forenoon when the weather was very unpleasant (it was a mixture of rain and snow), I told my wife that I felt that I had a good sermon in mind, discussing the conversion of Peter, but I was afraid there would be very few people there that morning. Nevertheless, I preached the sermon, and when the invitations for decisions came, a man rose to his feet and said he was like Peter. He wanted to confess his sins and be forgiven. A number of other men confessed either conversion or reconsecration. By the time we closed the meetings three weeks later, we had over one hundred eighty who had confessed their sins or reconsecrated their lives.

I alluded to the fact that we invited testimonies to be given in connection with these meetings. I am quite aware that sometimes these testimony meetings can be very much abused. One incident comes to my mind. I had encouraged a young convert to give a testimony because it would strengthen him in his endeavor to lead an upright life. He promised me that he would do so. Preceding him was another man giving his testimony. I looked towards the young convert and expected him to give his testimony. I saw him, however, turning pale and shaking his head. When I asked him after the meetings what had happened, he said, "You recall the man who gave his testimony just before I intended to give mine. He told us in his testimony how he had served God for many years and

what joy and strength it had brought him to testify at the meetings. He is the man who had been selling me the drink all these years, and that is the main evil I have to fight."

Union Meetings.—In the union meetings at Berne, constructive men like Friedrich Munz of the *Haus and Herd*; Philip Vollmer of the Central Theological Seminary at Dayton, Ohio; D. A. Hayes of Garrett Biblical Institute of Evanston, Illinois; C. H. Wedel, president of Bethel College; S. D. Gordon, known for his *Quiet Talks* on power and prayer; James M. Gray of the Moody Institute; Milton S. Reese, an evangelist, were men that we used.

Annual union services have been continued in Berne practically ever since they were started. I am sorry to say, however, that Mennonite simplicity seems to have been sacrificed for a more flamboyant type of revivalism. I marvel that sober-minded Mennonites would tolerate some of the methods that have been introduced.

The opportunities of the meetings suffered a considerable setback when an evangelist came to the town with his negro chauffeur and the evangelist's flashily-dressed wife. That happened after I had left Berne, but my impression was that a decidedly sensational type of revival meetings had been ushered in. If one can judge from reports, these meetings, from that time on, were not the constructive force that they had been before. It seems that the church's support of our own missions became less hearty also.

Faith Cures.—It is quite natural that as highly emotional persons as some of the people in Berne were

would be given to extremes on the question of doing or not doing something in case of sickness. We had a neighbor in town whose son was a physician and who undoubtedly spent some of his medical income to help his father, but the old man was very extreme when it came to the question of avoiding the use of medicine. It was a religious conviction with him. I recall one time, passing his place, I noticed he had a small cloth wrapped around his finger while he was at work trimming his trees. I detected the odor of medicine and couldn't refrain from making the remark, somewhat twittingly, that he must have used something on his injured finger, and he responded with the German expression, "Ja, ein Hausmittel." He had caused all kinds of worry to folks that had fallen ill from one cause or another. His outstanding accusation was that they evidently were not quite right with their God, or else they would not be afflicted with any sickness.

I recall the case of a healthy-looking young man who took a cold while he was digging some ditches and connecting some pipes. He was a plumber. His cold developed into pleurisy, which made it necessary for him to undergo an operation to relieve his lungs of pressure that was caused by a pleural fluid. Our neighbor of the *Hausmittel* episode was there in a short time and used that pet remark again, "Brother W., if you only trusted God, you wouldn't have any difficulty with your health." Brother W. was a devoted Christian, but he worried over the implied accusation of his neighbor. His wife was troubled about it too. I was called to his home by telephone and tried to set his thinking straight. He recovered from his immediate

illness, but finally after a relapse he succumbed to it.

In another case, a woman had a cancer that caused an intestinal obstruction. The man of the *Hausmittel* kept telling her that if she had kept right with her God she would not have had any difficulty. Her case grew worse, and finally she was facing death. Just before she passed away, I called on her and found our *Hausmittel* friend calling on her also. He saw that things were going to an end, and he comforted her with the thought that God could help, even through death. I asked him why he didn't give her that comfort earlier.

Sane Workers.—Of course, a wrong impression would be left if anyone should conclude from the above that all of the Berne people were of the emotional type and not very keen thinkers. We had the latter kind also. I am reminded of a young man who was energetic and active in our church. He was a student at Oberlin College and was put at the head of the Y. M. C. A. work there. He fell sick while at school and was sent to the hospital at Cleveland. The case was puzzling to the surgeons in charge, and they had to confess that their operation was of an explorative nature. In spite of the apparent mistake the surgeon had made, James Sprunger recovered. The development of his case indicated that a change of climate would be advantageous. He moved to California and became the state Y. M. C. A. secretary in that state. Later, during the World War, "Jim" was sent with Conrad Hoffman to do the work among the German soldiers. After he came back, the fact that he had tried to help the Germans proved a stigma on his name. He was ignored and maligned, and I believe he really died of a broken

heart, but his faith through all his experience never waned, and his disposition never soured. "Jim" Sprunger was a great inspiration to all who knew him.

We had another graduate of Oberlin College who did not have much sympathy with these extreme positions regarding "faithcure" that I have described above. He served as proof reader for the *Berne Witness*, the *Mennonite*, and the *Bundesbote*, because he could read either German or English, and even French. I found it an intellectual treat to sit down and talk with him, although he was not a very fluent speaker.

A Friendly Church.—It is needless for me to say that Mrs. Kliever and I keenly enjoyed our stay with those people of simple but earnest life. Of course, new adjustments had to be made to the ways of the folks there. We found it rather strange, for instance, that everybody wanted to call each one of us by our first names. I was "John" to them, and my wife was "Emma." Even children addressed us by our given names. I recall a little fellow came to my study door. Mrs. Kliever went to open the door, and I asked who was there. She jokingly responded, "It must be one of your school chums because he asked whether John was at home." I published a church booklet containing all the names of the members and listed Mrs. Kliever's name as "Emma." Shortly after the booklet was passed out, one of the women of the church, in her motherly way, said to Mrs. Kliever, "There now, I can call you by your first name."

I recall also how cordially the church members responded to anything that they could appreciate in either of us. A young girl approached Mrs. Kliever one

time and somewhat timidly said, "I hope that when I am a woman I can be one like you." Mrs. Kliewer's gentleness of manner had enlisted the young woman's admiration.

After eight years of a most happy service to these fine people, I responded to the call to become the head of Bethel College and the leading pastor of the Bethel College Church.

The Pastorate at Bethel College.—When, in 1912, I came to the pastorate of the church at Bethel College, I realized that there would be quite a variety of demands made on my time and talents. My hands would be full as president of the college, but the church also called me to become its pastor in connection with being president of the school. The congregation as such was small but composed of various groups. Each one of these groups had brought a different tradition and dialect with it. In these different groups some adjustments had to be made. Fortunately, not one of these groups had a sufficiently large preponderance to compel all the others to fall in line with it. So it was a case of co-operation among the groups, each bearing and forgiving the mistakes of the other.

The Bethel College Church has always been blessed with people of varied talents. Since the church is a part of a college community, the Sunday School has had an abundance, one might even say superabundance, of capable teachers. Our difficulty has been that of being compelled to take what time the college has left us for our activities, after the school programs have claimed their time and talent.

Week-Day School of Religion.—It was my privi-

lege to have a share in the introduction of the week-day school of religion in Newton. I do not claim any originality for the plan nor any perfection of it. In a large measure, we here in Newton have adopted, or maybe I should say adapted, the plan used by the churches of Salina, Kansas. Just as they have been changing parts of the plan, undoubtedly Newton will be forced gradually to do the same thing. There is no perfect school system of any kind today. It is in the process of becoming more perfect as the years go by.

Briefly stated, the week-day school of religion in Newton operates on the following plan: The basis of it all is to be found in the cooperation of the people with the public school system. One-fourth of a day in each school week the children are dismissed, so they can go to the respective churches and meet for the week-day school of religion. The public school system demands that the churches require for their teachers the same qualifications that would be required of their grade teachers.

I recall quite definitely how some of the pastors in the city feared that all kinds of complications would arise from such a cooperative system. The first fear was on the part of the churches, that they didn't have qualified teachers who could give their time. This fear, however, was unfounded, because every church had some teachers who would qualify if they had the time for the work.

The second fear also proved unfounded. Some of the pastors feared that the Catholics would be an obstacle in the carrying out of the plan. I contended that we should not mention the Catholics as opposing such a plan until we had spoken to the priests in the city of

Newton. I made an appointment with the leading Catholic priest. When I explained the plan to him and asked him what the Catholics would say, he replied, "Of course, they would not be concerned, because they have their own parochial school." But I put the question, "If they did not have such a school, would they be in favor of such an arrangement?" He answered with a bit of criticism in his reply, "I am glad that you Protestants are waking up to the fact that your children need religious training. If I were in a town where we did not have a parochial school, I would surely be in favor of such a plan as you have described." The plan was introduced and has been operating as a source of blessing to all of the churches in Newton.

CHAPTER V

CONFERENCE WORK

My first attempt to attend a session of our General Conference was frustrated by muddy roads. I was then teaching in the public schools of Halstead. My friend, now Dr. R. S. Haury, and I planned to leave after school Friday evening and spend Saturday and Sunday at the session of the Conference, which met in the Alexanderwohl Church. On the night from Thursday to Friday we heard the rain patter on our roof. The rain continued throughout the night, throughout Friday, Saturday, and Sunday. We had planned to use our bicycles, hoping to ride from Halstead to the Alexanderwohl Church. It was before the day of hard-surfaced roads and, of course, we had to give up our plans to the disappointment of us both.

The Prohibition Question.—I had an opportunity, soon after that, to attend a ministers' meeting, held at the Alexanderwohl Church. My cousin, Rev. G. N. Harms, of the Gnadenberg Church, said I would be perfectly welcome at these meetings, which assertion I found to be true. I recall that at that session the question under discussion was whether our Kansas prohibition law was Biblical. The negative attitude was

taken by Rev. William J. Ewert. It was responded to by Rev. David Goerz, who spoke fervently for the prohibition law of Kansas. After him rose the Rev. Christian Krehbiel. I could not help feeling somewhat sorry for the situation that I feared was arising. I knew that the Reverend Goerz and Reverend Krehbiel were usually on opposite sides of questions, and I feared a clash; but I soon discovered that I was mistaken in my fears. Reverend Krehbiel introduced his remarks by saying that we, as German-speaking Christians, had developed an attitude towards the drink question that was different from that of most of our English-speaking fellow-Christians. Then with the eloquence and force which was characteristic of Reverend Krehbiel, he said, wrinkling his brow and veritably thundering his words, "Brethren, we have made a name unto ourselves that stinks, and we must change our attitude, if we want to keep the respect of our English-speaking Christians." I do not remember what, if anything, more was said.

Home Mission Work.—My direct connection with conference work dates from the time when I held the pastorate at Wadsworth, Ohio. I was elected into the Home Mission Committee of the Middle District Conference. Members with me were the Brethren S. F. Sprunger and J. C. Mehl. Reverend Sprunger was very conservative in his reaction and counselled caution. Reverend Mehl was less afraid to venture forward. We had a number of projects in mind for missionary efforts.

A Mennonite living in Niagara Falls called our attention to the fact that a man who was interested in one of the factories in Niagara Falls could be induced to give a worthwhile donation for a church if we wanted

to start one there. The man was one of the owners of the Shredded Wheat Biscuit factory. Another possible location for work was in Fort Wayne, Indiana. Reverend Sprunger used a somewhat doubtful argument against the Fort Wayne project, saying that since those people were mostly from the Berne, Indiana, Church and since there was work enough and there were homes enough in Berne, Indiana, they should not have left.

The project in Niagara Falls was not taken up for one reason or another, and the Fort Wayne project was discouraged by people who should have supported it, and so it did not go forward either. Subsequently I was made president of the Middle District Conference. Because of my official position and because I had some contacts with the people in Niagara Falls, I was sent there to look into the possibility of strengthening a church located on the Canadian side. I made my mistake in that effort, however, by not falling into line definitely with their practice of feetwashing. I had never been in a church where that was being done. My church in Gnadenberg did not practice it. It had not brought that custom along from Russia, nor did my church in Wadsworth, Ohio, practice it, nor in Berne, Indiana. I was not very enthusiastic for introducing a church service which to me did not have very much meaning. Needless to say that my effort to strengthen the church was not very successful.

Fundamentalism and Modernism.—My work in the General Conference began at its session in the Berne, Indiana, Church. At the next session I was elected secretary of the conference. Unfortunately, at the first

session that I attended, the controversy about higher criticism claimed the chief attention on the program. The man who was under suspicion of fostering higher criticism was Dr. N. C. Hirschy, then president of Bluffton College. The man who supported the opposition to higher criticism was Rev. J. B. Baer of the churches in and about Bluffton. On the program was a paper opposing higher criticism, written by Missionary Rodolphe Petter. Since Brother Petter could not be present, he had Rev. J. S. Hirschler read it. He put more "pepper" into it than Reverend Petter would likely have done. To Dr. Hirschy it appeared, therefore, that Missionary Petter was the real attacker. I recall that Hirschy and Petter were to be at the next General Conference, which convened in Mountain Lake, Minnesota. I saw to it that the two men met personally. I felt that if Hirschy would meet Petter, some of the apparent bitterness of the address which was read by Hirschler would lose its sting; and so it did. Shortly after that, I saw Hirschy and Petter walking arm in arm past the church.

Repeatedly in my work, whether in the church, in missionary work, or in my school work, I have been asked the question of whether I am a fundamentalist or a modernist. I have usually disappointed people by telling them that I refuse to be called either. I recall that the word "modernist" is of Catholic origin. In the *Institute Catholique* at Paris, men like L. N. O. Duchesne and D'Hulst, and following them Alfred Loisy, have all been accused by the Jesuits of being modernists. One other man who was accused of being a modernist, after he made a study of the question, joined the Waldensian Church. Some of the things that have been

stressed by the Catholic Church in fighting modernism have even led to a number of encyclicals of the popes. One of these issued on November 18, 1893, called "Providentissimus Deus," was especially directed against higher criticism. Another, dated July 28, 1906, and addressed to the Bishop of Italy, ordered expulsion of all modernists from all seminaries and the priesthood, forbidding young clerics from attending public universities and students in the seminaries from reading newspapers and periodicals except the ones chosen by the Bishop. On September 8, 1907, another encyclical, by Pope Pius X, especially denounced the modernist priests. On September 10, 1910, another encyclical required an anti-modernist oath of the Bishop.

Of course, we realize that this anti-modernistic movement in the Catholic Church forbade a good many things that we, as Mennonites, especially stressed and recommended; so therein lies my reason for refusing to fight modernism with the weapon similar to the weapons of the Catholic Church. But I also refuse to be called a fundamentalist because that term implies the opposition to modernism in a way I could not support either, so that is my reason for refusing to be called either fundamentalist or modernist. I share the fundamental attitude of the Mennonite Church, but I refuse to be called by the name, modernist. It seems to me that above all others, Mennonites should remain true to their insistence upon freedom of conscience and personal conviction as being the basis for one's religious faith and attitudes and not the dictum of any special group or church.

The Fiftieth Conference Anniversary.—It be-

came my duty to serve as secretary of the Conference at the fiftieth anniversary held in Beatrice, Nebraska. I may almost seem like being prone to flippancy when I say that one of the interesting events in connection with that conference was a laughter-provoking remark made by a visiting minister of a non-Menno-nite church who was asked to take part in the remarks. Shortly before his remarks, the conference had discussed the importance of the school problem, specifically the importance of theological training. Prof. H. H. Ewert in that connection said we should not, first of all, speak about the cap of our school suit, meaning the theological school, but should be sure that we have the boy fitted out with the rest of the suit first. Prof. H. D. Penner, at that time conducting the preparatory school at Hillsboro, Kansas, alluding to the remark of Ewert about the cap, said, "Well, I am really concerned with the shoes." This discussion was in German and the minister of the non-Mennonite denomination spoke English and applied that term literally saying, "You Mennonites must be a group of wonderful people. Rev. Christian Krehbiel has just said that he was a farmer. Now this brother," referring to Professor Penner, "says he is a shoemaker." Of course laughter drowned out the rest of what he wanted to say, and, embarrassed, he asked, "Have I said anything foolish?"

That was the last session at which I served as secretary of the Conference, because I was elected as member of the Mission Board at that meeting. In this board I served first as member and then as president until my resignation at the Conference in 1935.

The Federal Council of Churches.—There was a

time when our General Conference belonged to the Federal Council of Churches. Generally Prof. G. A. Haury of Bethel College was our representative. At other times that duty fell to me. When the rumblings of war began, our Mennonite people felt that they might be asked to promote war propaganda if they remained in the council and suggested that we withdraw. They did not seem to realize that that would be the time when our peace principles should be stressed in season and out of season. It is to be regretted that the Federal Council of Churches for a while did swing into the mania of stressing the preaching of war from the pulpits, but we know that the peace sentiment began to be just as much stressed, and the regrettable thing was that we as Mennonites, who claim to be peace people, had no part in swinging the council to the better attitude. The change for the better was made without us. I was elected president of the Conference in 1917 and was instructed as president to take the announcement to the Federal Council of Churches that we had withdrawn. I refused to take that message of withdrawal to the council and therefore refused the presidency of the Conference. The Conference showed a more liberal attitude than I had expected because it accepted my resignation as president but at once elected me to continue my membership on the Mission Board.

CHAPTER VI

FOREIGN MISSIONS

Quite early, I was introduced to missionary work. The first suggestion to enter the work myself was made to me by Rev. H. R. Voth, at that time stationed at Darlington, Oklahoma, among the Arapahoe Indians. He suggested that I enter the work as his secretary, taking care of his correspondence. For various reasons this did not seem as a call to me. Some years later, I learned to know Reverend Voth personally, when he was working in the Field Museum at Chicago, preparing an Indian display to be shown at the World's Fair. I expressed appreciation for the type of work he was doing, and he responded very cordially. Soon I found that the Mission Board in those days had discouraged him in his work for the museum, thinking it was not missionary work. Later, the work, however, proved of considerable value, especially from the research angle, and its results can be found today in all leading university libraries. Reverend Voth became a recognized authority on the religion of the Hopi and Arapahoe Indians.

Then I was elected into the Mission Board, and when Professor C. H. Wedel passed away, I was made president of the board. That was in the year 1908,

and I had the honor of remaining president of the board until my resignation for health reasons at the last session of the General Conference in 1935. As president of the board, I was sent to the Orient to visit our mission fields in China and India. To my great satisfaction, my old friend, Mr. J. P. Habegger of Berne, Indiana, made his world tour at the same time, and so we traveled together all the way. Since that was soon after the World War, and as we wanted to enter a number of different countries, we had to make a great many precautionary arrangements. India especially guarded very carefully any approach into its country.

China.—Our field in China was visited first. On the way from China to India, we also stopped at the Dutch Mission on the Island of Java. In both China and India there are two types of missionaries. The one class advocates the introduction of liberal autonomy to the new converts, and the other class insists on a very strict hedging about of the new converts. The missionaries of the latter class want to transplant our American Christianity into Chinese or Indian soil. In more recent years our churches had a very clear demonstration by two Chinese Christian young men, James Liu and Stephen Wang, who attended Bethel College in 1932, that it pays to treat young native Christians so as to evoke their confidence in us and not attempt to curb them too much. These young men at present are rendering outstanding service in our China field and show what a Christ-saturated life of well-trained Chinese can do for China and her needs.

The missionaries with one exception maintain cor-

dial and sympathetic relations with the natives understanding the Chinese viewpoint and the Chinese people, so that even persons in official and government positions understood and sympathized with our missionaries.

I am reminded of the medal of honor that was bestowed on our Dr. Ed. G. Kaufman as a special recognition by the Chinese government for work along educational lines that he had done for the Chinese people. Rev. S. J. Goering also showed an exceptionally fine and sympathetic attitude. He was prepared for a special type of work. While studying sociology at the University of Chicago, he also did work of a practical nature on the side. He developed such a knack and technical knowledge that his reports on case histories later induced his instructor to invite him to make a special trip from Newton back to Chicago and appear in person before an interested group with all expenses paid. Mr. Goering accepted the invitation and met with the group. Later in China he discovered a wide field for similar work and found his way into the hearts and homes of the Chinese. Similar things of excellent work done might be said about the two Pannabeckers and their wives, who entered the mission later, and of others also.

Christian social work is receiving increasing recognition as important and fruitful missionary endeavor. Unfortunately our people have not always understood such endeavor and, therefore, occasionally opposed it which has caused some problems on the mission field. No doubt the day will come when we will emphasize this phase of work more again.

On this visit to China I also had occasion to notice the rather crude thinking on the part of some of the Chinese people. For instance, a Y. M. C. A. man from America, who was lecturing on health problems, warned against the dangers that the flies would bring in summer. He had an illustrated lecture and showed flies, enlarged many times, thrown on a screen. One of his audience in a very naive way remarked, "Well, if that's the size of the flies in America, I'm not surprised that they fear them."

I noticed how the idols were being neglected by the common Chinese. They poked fun at them and said they couldn't even help themselves; so how could they help others? Whole temples full of gods were in a dilapidated condition.

It wasn't always easy to work into the situation as it arose from time to time. I recall how I failed in one matter that was committed to my care. That however, occurred here in America. Miss Talitha Neufeld was at home on furlough and was planning to do work independent of the Mission Board. She was in California during part of her furlough, and I was asked in behalf of the board, to talk things over with her. I made an appointment to meet her at the D. C. Welty home in Los Angeles, California. I, however, failed in my endeavor to pave the way for her future. The board had instructed me that it was in sympathy with Miss Neufeld's aim, but felt that the carrying out of the plan should not be decided by one person **only**, but should be submitted to the Chinese field as such, since a particular plan of one missionary would have its

effect on the plans of others also. The plan was, therefore, practically disapproved, even before I met Miss Neufeld, and I feel that very likely she severed her connection with our mission largely because she could not carry out her plan. She went back and worked among the Chinese in an independent way. She suffered a good bit of hardship, although she did it willingly and unflinchingly. Her effort was not a complete success. We should very likely have tried to keep her on the force, even if the others in the field would not vote for her plan.

I recall how, while visiting in the Kai Chow Church in China, I observed something which has taught me much about the change the gospel is bringing into the lives of people there. The postmaster of the town of some thirty thousand inhabitants, Mr. Hsu by name, was the father of twin girls. According to the Chinese conception he would not have any obligation towards them because they were not boys. On Sunday morning, Mr. Hsu took his twin girls to the altar in the church to have them blessed, or consecrated. He carried the girls, one in one arm and the other in the other. He did not have an apologetic look. He marched forward with all evidence of pride, while the non-Christian people present looked with very much surprise that Mr. Hsu, a man of social position, would not be ashamed to take his two girls in his arms and offer them for consecration. I couldn't help thinking that that ceremony preached volumes to the non-Christian members of the city.

India.—In India I was also privileged to view different types of work. The work fostering the support

of the native Christians in the Basna field has taken quite a firm hold and is very helpful in making them self-supporting. Agriculture is benefited; weaving is done in a more modern way; some carpentering has been started; a system of banking has been introduced that develops the natives in caring for their own accounting.

I noticed the difference in attitude towards the temples in India, as compared with the attitude toward the temples in China. The British government guardedly protects all temples in India against desecration. The question naturally arises which is better, the Chinese attitude of contempt toward temples or the Indian attitude of consideration.

In India our board met a difficult situation in connection with our missionary, Ezra Steiner. He felt urged to go to Thibet but promised to enter our India mission field on a ten-year contract with the understanding that after that time the question should be opened again as to whether he should go back or make a change. It fell to my lot, while visiting the India field, to talk the matter through with Mr. Steiner to try to persuade him to stay in the field. The board thought that after he had been there for ten years, had learned the language, had endeared himself to the people, and had, in turn, learned to love them, he would feel like going back and continuing his work. I found, however, that Mr. Steiner insisted on carrying out his plan to go to Thibet, although his wife felt more inclined to stay in India. Mr. Steiner had done an excellent piece of work in the India field. In fact, he opened the field that has since developed into our Southern India

Field, Basna. But we could not persuade him to see his way clear to stay.

Of course, the question arose at once, in case Mr. Steiner and his family went back to America, whether he should be considered as being on furlough and get his furlough allowance. The board decided that he would not be entitled to any furlough allowance because he was really off the list. He was, therefore, thrown on the support of his relatives. Our board tried several times to place him elsewhere in our mission field, but he was not inclined to make that change either. Supported by his relatives and friends, he finally took up work in Thibet, where he was until recently, when he came back to America.

In India, as in China, there are those of our missionaries who do rather exceptional work. Outstanding among these efforts is the leper asylum at Champa, which is one of the leading asylums in India. Rev. P. A. Penner has been given the Kaiser-I-Hind medal by the Viceroy of India as recognition of his work. His Alma Mater, Bethel College, conferred upon him the honorary degree of Doctor of Divinity.

Rev. John Thiessen has done outstanding work in education and has received government recognition for his service.

Outstanding work is done in the southern part of our field. This part of the field was opened by Reverend Steiner and was later in charge of Rev. P. J. Wiens and was finally brought to fuller fruition by Rev. S. T. Moyer. So successful is this work that another mission society in India invited Reverend Moyer to read a report on his plan of work and had this re-

port spread on the minutes of its organization. The aim is in the direction of perfecting indigenous movements of the native church. Part of the plan concerns economic questions. Other parts deal with agricultural developments and weaving, and even a banking system is included, where natives can deposit their money and effect some saving. Spiritual progress is the aim of the whole plan.

In mentioning some of these workers, we should not get the impression that other workers have not done outstanding work. Time and space does not permit even to make only an attempt to mention all the faithful work done in our India and other mission fields.

It was a pleasure, when visiting India, to see ninety-six converts baptized in one of the jungles. Today I carry a cane cut out of that jungle by one of our young Christians in the field.

Interesting sidelights upon the work and upon the method in which the work is being evaluated by the natives came out in the discussion in different parts of the field and at times even off the field. I recall a visit I once had with an intelligent native Hindu on the train. He argued for the autonomy of the native people in India, and he said that they should be given some autonomy to develop their own ability in that direction. He said, "Of course, we will make mistakes, but we will not learn by waiting until we do not make mistakes." The same argument would apply to our different types of work among the American Indians.

The American Indians.—I also visited practically all of our stations among the American Indians. Our American Indian work is in a rather scattered field.

We do work among the Cheyennes and Arapahoes in Oklahoma and Montana, and the Hopis in Arizona. Among some of these Indians our missionaries have done outstanding work with the language study. We were very fortunate in getting an experienced linguist to do some of this work. Rev. Rodolphe Petter came into our field with an unusually fine language background. He speaks and writes German, English, and French, besides writing and reading Latin, Greek, and Hebrew. His language work among the Cheyenne Indians in Montana and Oklahoma has received unusual recognition on the part of linguists of national and international prominence. Bethel College granted him the honorary degree of Doctor of Divinity. Also, in recognition of the fine work he has done, some mission friends made his trip to Switzerland, his home country, financially possible. In the Arapahoe field we had no such outstanding linguist. However, among the Hopis a number of our workers have done some language work. The four gospels have been translated into Hopi, and were printed by the American Bible Society. J. R. Duerksen with the help of Otto and Johnson prepared it for the printing. After my travels to all these various mission fields, I visited most of the congregations at home for the purpose of reporting on my findings in the field.

Other Observations on the World Tour.—In connection with my visit in Germany I was asked by the Emergency Relief Commission of the General Conference of the Mennonites of North America to visit the relief work in the Erz Mountains, which had been, in a measure, supported by our Relief Commission. Rev. Michael Horsch of Ingolstadt paved the way for us to

visit that work. We found that the dire need during the World War was still evident in this region. This need would have been even greater if people living there had not been helped in the so-called Quaker kitchens. Even with that help, a number of years after the World War the results of malnutrition of various kinds, such as rickets, were still quite evident. It was our impression that our Relief Commission here in America had, under the supervision of the Friends, helped carry on a very needful type of work there.

Before I had left for the Orient to visit in the mission fields, I was approached by Dr. Wilbur K. Thomas of the Friends Service Committee as to the possibility, in connection with my other visits, also to go to Russia in the interest of relief there. I hesitated to promise to do this, because I knew that my program would be full if I should even in a measure try to carry out my intended program. Before the end of my journey, I repeatedly realized that one could attempt to do too many things. My main purpose, of course, was to visit the mission fields.

I was, therefore, greatly pleased to learn later that Rev. C. E. Krehbiel and Rev. P. H. Unruh found it possible to go into Russia. That the work in Russia was fraught with danger was shown by the fact that their American coworker, Mr. Clayton Kratz, unexpectedly disappeared and, as far as we know, also perished.

On the island of Java, I found a vigorous mission work building for the future. The senior missionary, Reverend Jantz, has started on literary work by preparing a dictionary of the Javanese and Dutch languages.

He has printed a number of Javanese folk songs; he has started hospital work, including work with lepers; and he has developed to a remarkable degree the wonderful musical ability among the young folks. His choral work is really wonderful. In an economical way he has made considerable progress in subletting parts of the native villages and in starting the villagers agriculturally.

When I landed on the island of Java, I found that my having been born in Russia, would not necessarily open any doors for me. When we landed in Batavia, on the island of Java, a barefoot policeman conducted me from the vessel to a police officer in the city, because he saw that my birthplace was indicated on my passport as having been Russia. However, the chief officer was very profuse in his apologies for the treatment I had received. He said that his officer had been "overzealous." I had no further difficulty, but the thought occurred that maybe my having been born in Russia would have closed the doors to me there instead of opening them.

From Germany my travel companion, Mr. J. P. Habegger, from Berne, Indiana, and I went to Holland especially to see the city of Amsterdam. We went unannounced into the Mennonite Church there, which perhaps is the largest Mennonite church in the world. It has a membership of about six thousand. We found our stay there very interesting and informative. There was evidence of culture and wealth. We noticed that the leading members of the church, especially the men, were quite up to date in dress. Many of them appeared in Prince Albert suits and silk hats. When we came

into the home of the Reverend Doctor Kuyper, the leading minister of the church, we were very graciously asked by Mrs. Kuyper in what language we preferred to converse, because, she said, every member in her family could speak Dutch, German, English, and French. It appeared that they would unconsciously change from one language to another and converse in one as readily as in the others.

I was very much surprised to discover that, piecing together my knowledge of English, German, and Low German, I could follow a Dutch sermon quite readily. It happened that the secretary of the Dutch Mennonite Mission Board was in the pulpit. We found out that the Dutch Mennonite Church was just on the point of sending Rev. J. M. Leendertz to America in an endeavor to collect money for the support of their mission work on the island of Java, the very work that we had visited a few months before and for which we could speak a word of appreciation. In our American way, we expected the secretary of the board to make warm mention of the mission of Reverend Leendertz, but to our surprise we noticed no reference in his address to that important trip. I asked Dr. Kuyper definitely whether no mention had been made of it, and he said somewhat hesitatingly, "No." He explained that missions were not in sufficiently good standing to be publicly spoken of by a minister. I ventured the remark that possibly they as a church were not sufficiently interested in missions, and that I was a bit afraid they needed to work more energetically in the churches of Holland rather than to ask the American churches to help. I also mentioned the fact that at the particular time col-

lections in America would be very poor because of the hard times and because of the many demands that were being made on the American churches of the Mennonite faith.

We visited with Reverend Leendertz the next day. Both Mr. Habegger and I assured him that we would be glad for his visit to America, but we feared that for collections this would be an inopportune time. We found, however, that he had already made all his plans to sail in a day or two.

We found Reverend Leendertz stationed in Wieringen, which was the place to which the German Crown Prince had been exiled. The Germans, who were not very friendly to the Crown Prince, made a joking remark in reference to the motto of his military group, which was *Wir ringen bis zum Tod* (we strive unto death), and they said it should be *Wieringen bis zum Tod*. Afterwards, however, we found out that the Crown Prince was a very likable person socially and had a group of children following him wherever he went. If the contention is true that to get an index to a person's character, you must see how the children behave towards that person, then the German Crown Prince passed that test quite well.

Reverend Leendertz proved a very welcome visitor in our churches in America. We had an opportunity in our own home to show him our hospitality and enjoyed his visit very much. Our children received letters from him written in good English and at other times letters in good German, but as a collection tour his trip was not very successful.

The Mission Board.—For years the only sessions

held by the mission board were in connection with the General Conference. The thought was that such arrangement would save extra expense. Then, again, the sessions were held where at the same time arrangements for contacts with churches could be made. For years there was no budget prepared for the next triennium. The whole matter was in a haphazard state. In fact, the publishing of the first budget created considerable opposition, because the thought was that expecting so much money from the churches would serve as a discouragement.

Later, the board definitely selected a place of meeting, and, in order to reduce traveling expenses, one that was centrally located. The place chosen was Newton, Kansas. Mrs. Kliever invited the board to meet in our home, arguing that it was not necessary to pay hotel bills while we had room to spare in our house. This arrangement later proved too much of a task for her health; nevertheless, she kept up the invitations almost to her death. In fact, the mission board was planning to meet a few weeks after her passing away, the plans having been made previous to her death.

Board Members.—Outstanding members of the mission board were Rev. S. F. Sprunger of Berne, Indiana; Rev. A. B. Shelly of Quakertown, Pennsylvania; Rev. Gustav Harder of Whitewater, Kansas; Mr. J. G. Regier and Mr. J. E. Regier, both of Newton, Kansas; Prof. C. H. Wedel of Bethel College; and Rev. P. H. Richert of Goessel, Kansas. Each of these men had special qualifications and occasionally even special weaknesses. Reverend Sprunger's hobby was to be in opposition to the so-called project method of supporting

workers. Reverend Shelly had the facility of seeing beforehand what each member would advocate in connection with different questions as they came up. Reverend Harder did not venture out with a thought until the others had spoken; then he had a fine way of either supporting the thoughts of others or expressing a mild warning against them. The two Regier brothers followed Reverend Harder as treasurers of the board and did the work very efficiently, though gratis. Prof. C. H. Wedel always served as our source of information. Rev. P. H. Richert was always ready for work and could always be depended upon.

Other Work.—A problem arose when a former Bethel student continued his work at the Garrett Biblical Institute. Some board members objected and proposed that we write to the school, telling them that we objected to some of their teaching. Others pointed out that the school had accepted our student even without charging tuition and that it would be rather late and unkind to object now since the student was already there. There was considerable discussion on this point.

The Mission Board frequently was asked to do work which wasn't on the regular schedule but which was urgently needed. In April, 1926, word came from our Montana mission field that the Christian Indians there were very much agitated because they had received reports that our mission would lose its title to the land on which our station was located. It is not certain just how that rumor got started. Reverend Petter was sufficiently disturbed by it that he urged the board to put itself in touch with authorities at Washington at once. It happened that I was scheduled to

go to Hartford, Connecticut, that May to give a series of talks on the Mennonite church polity at the Hartford Theological Seminary. I, therefore, arranged to stop in Washington to investigate the truth of that report. I called at the office of Senator Charles Curtis, afterwards Vice-President. Senator Capper was at the sickbed of his wife and could not be reached. Curtis, being himself part Indian, was always very much interested in anything that worked towards the cultural advancement of any Indian tribe. He listened with a great deal of interest when told of the translation work that Reverend Petter was doing for the Cheyenne Indians and was, therefore, quite concerned about anything that threatened a retarding of that work.

I also saw our own representative, W. A. Ayres, about the matter, and Mr. Ramseyer of Iowa, who, as far as I know, was the only Mennonite in the lower house of Congress at that time. I got in touch with the Commissioner of Indian Affairs. These men all promised me that they would watch for that bill, fearing that it might be introduced in the last days of that Congress in order to be railroaded through in the press of the closing events. They promised that they would hold up any hurried legislation on the matter. The bill never came up and, of course, was not passed.

I was greatly interested in the adoption of a pension plan for our missionaries. After our board had worked out a suggested plan it fell to me to propose it to the Conference, which also later accepted it. However, the plan was never carried out as originally hoped. Perhaps it was a bit too complicated to be easily understood. It is possible, too, that the plan failed because

the ministers were not included and for that reason had no special incentive to push it. It must be confessed that the board also fell short by not keeping the plan energetically before the churches. The ministers were to present it to the churches which, however, was neglected in some cases and is another reason for its failure. It always seemed strange to me that secular organizations, like the railroads, approve of pension plans, but that our churches feel quite complacent in neglecting to provide arrangements to take proper care of their workers.

At the session of the General Conference, held in Upland, California, it seems to me that a blunder in judgment was made, when Rev. Grover T. Soldner failed of reelection to the Mission Board. He had served with acknowledged faithfulness. At the request of the board, he prepared the mission exhibit for the session at the last Conference. General satisfaction was expressed with the way this work was done. He deserved reelection and to be shown appreciation. Shortly before the nomination and the election of a board member, the desirability of working with the Central Conference of Mennonites was discussed and generally conceded. Now the only argument against the election of Brother Soldner was the fact that he was serving as pastor of a Central Conference congregation. That did not sound consistent with the argument for cooperation with the Central Conference. Before long these two conferences should get together.

CHAPTER VII

PEACE AND TEMPERANCE

Early Peace Work.—Before leaving Wadsworth, I had entered the ranks of peace workers. I didn't have far to look to find my peace convictions. The moving of our families from Russia to America was a peace movement. To be true to the convictions of my ancestors, I really had to hold to this inheritance of peace. And still, it is as the German poet puts it: "Was du geerbt von deinen Vaetern hast, Erwirb es, um es zu besitzen." Roughly the meaning of this is: "What we have inherited from our fathers we should earn in order to possess it."

McKinley's Funeral.—The occasion of taking up my peace work really came about quite naturally. After the assassination of President McKinley, it was decided to set aside a day of special commemoration in his behalf. This was done, not only at Canton, Ohio, where his burial took place, but elsewhere also. In our town of Wadsworth such a service was arranged for at the opera house. Quite a number of people living in Wadsworth knew Mr. McKinley personally, and I admired him. It fell to my lot to give the commemoration address at the Wadsworth meeting.

I thought very highly of Mr. McKinley, although

I had not known him personally, and it was, therefore, comparatively easy for me to deliver the address. What I said was very kindly received, and the Grand Army of the Republic of the town invited me to give them the annual memorial address for the departed soldiers. I told the men who conveyed the invitation to me that my convictions were in the direction of peace, and I was afraid I could not satisfy the Grand Army men. I felt that some of the things I might say would be like "bearding the lion in his den." They, however, insisted, and since the services were to be held in my church, I accepted the invitation with the understanding that they would let me say whatever was in agreement with my conscience.

I recall how a widow of a soldier was very much wrought up over the fact that I would not indulge in the usual laudations of the patriotism of the soldiers. I had quite a time to shake her off. On the other hand, there was a lawyer, an old soldier, in my audience, who expressed his delight at my having been willing to call a spade a spade. He complimented me for speaking of war as a ghastly thing rather than praising it. The sermon was given some publicity and was published in the *American Advocate of Peace* in the city of Washington.

Intercollegiate Peace Contests.—While I lived in Berne, I assisted in calling together a peace conference at Goshen College, to which the school men and pastors of the Mennonite, Quaker, and Dunkard churches of that section of states were invited. Prof. Noah Byers, the dean of Goshen College, presided at the meeting. Dr. N. C. Hirschy, at that time president of Central

Mennonite College, later Bluffton College, was one of the men present. The outstanding person on the program was Benjamin F. Trueblood of the Friends Church at Washington, D. C. I remember very vividly a brief conversation I had with him at the close of the meeting when I invited him to come to a meeting at Berne. When I discovered that he was a Friend, I told him that I was glad because I had feared that he was a Unitarian, for I knew the Unitarians were quite active in the peace movement. The fine, stately gentleman, putting his hands on my shoulders, answered, "My dear young brother, Unitarianism would be an intellectual impossibility for me." From this Goshen meeting there resulted the organization of the Intercollegiate Peace Oratorical Contests, which have become quite popular in a great many of the colleges of the country. It is a forensic effort at which the arguments for world peace are presented in rather effective ways.

Peace Congresses.—Through Mr. Trueblood my attention was called to the annual peace congresses that were held in the city of Chicago, to which outstanding men of the different nations were invited. I remember the German ambassador, von Bernstorff, was at one of these congresses. There the United States representative spoke who had helped in the settlement of the trouble with Venezuela, which had come very near thrusting these two nations into war. I remember he made the remark, "If you want to approach another nation on the question of making a peaceable settlement, you must be willing to assume that your own nation might be at fault."

MENNONITES AND THE WORLD WAR

Exemption Committee.—At the time of the World War an added responsibility was put on me. I was placed on the Peace Committee of the General Conference, whose duty was to help young men who had been called to the colors and had come into difficulties because of their non-participation in war preparations. We had a very capable committee. On it were such men as Dr. Mosiman of Bluffton, Ohio; Honorable Peter Jansen of Beatrice, Nebraska, who had worked under President McKinley as a member of the World's Fair Commission in Paris; Rev. H. P. Krehbiel, the author of the *History of the General Conference of the Mennonite Church of North America*; Honorable Maxwell H. Kratz, a lawyer of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. The man who possibly did the most outstanding work on this committee and who served as spokesman was Rev. H. P. Krehbiel.

Our committee was repeatedly called upon at different times and various places to intercede for mitigating decisions in cases where our young men were in trouble with the military authorities because of their refusal to take up arms.

The extent to which our men could go in taking up services was quite diversely interpreted. Some advocated absolute refusal of everything that was connected with military service. Others thought that serving soldiers, when they were in human need, would be permissible, as one fellow man should help another whether the command to help came from military au-

thorities or otherwise. I personally leaned to this thought. It was not easy to give an answer that would serve as norm under all circumstances.

Work in Washington.—When we made the trip to Washington in the interest of the boys who had asked for exemption from military service, we entered the city on a morning train. In a paper which we purchased while still on the train, we noticed an Associated Press report that the next evening the President of the United States would set forth a statement indicating what should constitute non-combatant service. After we arrived at the Washington station, we went at once to the office of General Enoch H. Crowder, who was the recruiting officer. He sent us to the office of a Major, one of the dollar-a-day men who had enlisted for the term of the war and had been given a military name. After we stated our mission, the man repulsed us rather brusquely by pointing out that there are many people who would like to shirk the duty of serving their country but who are, nevertheless, ready to put a stick of dynamite under some of the federal buildings, even if that would mean a loss of life.

Reverend Krehbiel, our spokesman, then gave this man a very fine talk on the past history of the Mennonites, stressing especially what they had been compelled to suffer on account of their peace convictions. The Major apologized and said, "Gentlemen, I see I have you listed with the wrong group." Then, in a friendly way, he directed us to an official who had just dictated a statement for the Associated Press, which should go into the evening papers. This official was good enough to show us the proposed statement of the President re-

garding the non-combatant service and asked if it would be acceptable to our group. Of course, we had to be very cautious about expressing our position; still, we did not dare to compromise. So all we could say was that the statement was not altogether acceptable.

The evening papers then said that the announcement of what constituted non-combatant service would not come out until the next day. We got the impression that the promised statement was withheld because it was not to our liking.

We also went to the office of Mr. Newton D. Baker, at that time the Secretary of War. He showed kindly consideration for our attitude and confided to us that before the war he had also been classified as a pacifist. He suggested that we should not be too eager to get an absolute exemption because that might subject our boys to mob violence on the part of those people whose sons had to go to war.

Mr. Baker advised that we go back to General Crowder and present our case again. We wondered how that gentleman would treat us after he had dismissed us rather brusquely on the day before, but, to our surprise, we found him in a jovial mood. He happened to be in a room without screens and so had to fight the flies. He remarked in a joking way that the flies were especially hard on him because of his bald head. Of course, General Crowder was not disposed to give us any concessions. In fact, he said that the President would have to interpret the law for us and that he himself had nothing to say on the question.

The President's statement regarding non-combatant service had been promised us when we visited the war

office. However, it was of such a general nature that evidently different concessions would have to be made in later announcements. This proved to be true. Step by step these concessions were made, and gradually exemption privileges were more clearly defined. But in any case a good part of the decision was left to the commanding officer under whom a specific case arose. Our committee, therefore, was compelled to make trips to the different camps as our boys would get into difficulties from time to time.

In Various Camps.—In these camps we found this to be the case: The higher the rank of an officer was, the more considerate he was towards our boys. Once, Brother Krehbiel and I were called to Camp Funston, which was then under the command of General Wood. We found a number of our boys outside the barracks, although it was a cold day. We found that the order to have the boys outside the barracks in the cold night air was given by a subofficer. General Wood apparently knew nothing about it. He soon gave the order that the boys should be taken into the building for the night. We felt that he had made a very generous concession in behalf of the boys because of the plea we made to him.

At another time, we visited the camp near Deming, New Mexico. We had been informed by a telegram that some of the soldiers were manhandling our conscientious objectors by forcing a rubber hose into their mouths and then turning on the water, which brought them to the verge of strangulation. The man who had charge of the camp at that time was General Nelly. He seemed to be in a somewhat jovial mood,

although he was taken by surprise when we told him of the predicament in which some of our boys had been. He rather apologized for his effeminate name and said that "Nelly" did not sound very much like a soldier. I told him that I was quite used to that because my father-in-law also had a woman's name, "Ruth," but still had quite masculine qualities. We had a good laugh over it; then he said, "If you are the president of a school, you will be acquainted with the pranks of students. Soldiers are just like students in that respect; they slipped one over on us."

Another camp was located at San Antonio, Texas. Here we found that the captain who had charge of those applying for non-combatant service was very much interested in agriculture. For a while we thought that maybe an agricultural concession could be obtained for our boys. He said he liked the fellows so well that he wished to stay with them. I must say, again and again we marvelled how remarkably well the untried war machinery functioned in spite of the lesser slips that occurred. Personal cruelties were usually committed by inferior officers. The higher officials as a rule were sympathetic and understood our position.

Humorous Reactions.—Our own duties were made more pleasant when we saw that the officers in the War Department at Washington were quite willing to see even the humor of the situation. We had a man in our committee, whose name I have not given, whose knowledge of the English language was very limited. I recall when he spoke to the Secretary of War, Baker, he tried to quote the expression "Give unto Caesar what is Caesar's and unto God what is God's;" but he re-

membered the German, which says to give unto the Kaiser what is the Kaiser's. Of course, naturally, we would fear that people would think of Kaiser Bill only, but undoubtedly, Mr. Baker realized the situation, and, instead of becoming provoked at such a language blunder, he simply smiled and very likely, after we left, enjoyed a good laugh as he was relating the incident to others.

Let me repeat what I said above, that with the higher officers we got more considerate treatment than with the lower, although the whole situation was a vexing one and often tried the patience of officers and soldiers.

At the time when the anti-German hysteria was at its height, a would-be patriotic committee of citizens of Newton came to me and demanded that all German courses at Bethel College be dropped, and that it be announced that Bethel College was the first college in the state where such dropping of German should go into effect. I advised that for the sake of peace, we would drop all German courses but, pedagogically, I felt it was a mistake, and that we would not advertise it as a policy for the future. The board took favorable action to this suggestion, and for a while no German was being taught at Bethel College, although we were not proud of this lack of a complete college course.

German Church Services.—The attempt was made to drop all German services in the city of Newton. At a ministerial meeting I was asked my opinion on the question. I replied to them that we would not find much difficulty here in the college church, but I would have to oppose such an attempt for the Mennonite

Church in town. We people in the college church would all understand the English, and dropping the German would not mean dropping all services for us; but in the Newton Mennonite Church there would be quite a number who did not understand any English and would be deprived of all services. The ministerial union agreed with me in my contention, and that was the disposition that was made of the question as far as the Mennonite churches were concerned.

The ministers of Newton were considerably divided on the question of having German services or opposing all German. A minister of one of the town churches had decided to take in a whole German-speaking church. He did so and found these German members, as he told me afterwards, his most faithful members. At a union meeting in the park some one asked this more tolerant minister to lead in a closing prayer and to be sure to mention that the Lord should bless the Americans and oppose the Germans. The minister who was asked to speak the closing prayer asked God to guide us in our thinking in this troublesome time so that we would not be unchristian in our attitude to any human being, whether friend or foe.

Patriotic Preaching.—At the same time another minister of the town was asked by one of his members to preach on the commandment "Thou shalt not kill." This member had a Mennonite heritage, and the minister pounced upon the opportunity at once and said that if he would have preached the sermon some years ago, he would have said the attitude of Christ would undoubtedly be not to kill; but now that the war was on, he would have to say that, were Christ on earth today,

He would undoubtedly be in the trenches fighting the Germans; or if not, he, the minister, would have to repudiate Him.

Armistice Thanksgiving.—In all this agitation of mind, finally the Armistice Treaty was signed. On Thanksgiving Day following the Armistice, a committee of ministers asked me to preach the Thanksgiving sermon. They gave me the complimentary assurance that I would give the right ring to the Thanksgiving sermon at this time. To my discomfort, I noticed one of the ministers of the town whose attitude toward the peace question was directly opposed to mine was on the platform to deliver a sermon also, and when I looked into the audience I saw the uniform of a man who was serving as an army chaplain. I felt that it might be a case of two against one, and I would be on the side of the minority. I preached, however, and thanked God for the cessation of the war. The army chaplain followed me, and he supported me rather warmly in my attitude against war. The home preacher spoke last, and he was in a rather uncomfortable position. I remember especially that a local army man, Colonel P. M. Hoisington, spoke words of approval for my sermon.

A Memorial Service.—Shortly after that, a memorial service for the Harvey County boys who had fallen in the war across the waters was arranged, and I was asked to be one of the speakers. I asked for advice from two friends, whether I should accept the invitation or not. One of them advised decidedly against it, saying, "They want to set a trap for you." The other one was just as definite in advising for it, saying, "There

is a chance to let your light shine." I accepted the invitation. I spoke according to my convictions, realizing that there were many parents in my audience who wished they could have stopped the war before their sons had fallen victims of it. I left the meeting with the confidence that I had had a sympathetic hearing. A number of parents of fallen soldiers expressed the wish that my sermon could appear in print. I prepared it for print, and it was published in the local paper soon after that.

Since that time, about all the different denominations all over the country have expressed, in their ecclesiastical bodies of highest authority, their agreement with our peace sentiment; talking on peace today would be an easier matter than in those days when the war drums had scarcely ceased beating.

The Cause of Temperance.—There is no doubt that driving the saloons out of Berne was the contribution that Fred Rohrer made to the town. I found, however, that the religious forces in the town had been definitely split in two by this fight. The Mennonite church led in the dry attacks, and the German Reformed church was mostly, though not entirely, with the saloon element. I was in a peculiar position. True to my Kansas heritage, I was a "dry;" so I naturally would line up with the drys. However, there were some things in the attack on the wets of which I could not altogether approve. That I kept my reputation as a friend of the dry element despite that difficulty was proved by the fact that the Anti-Saloon League approached me with the question of whether I would consider the candidacy for senator to the legislature of the state pro-

posed by the drys. I was compelled to refuse to enter the race. My objective became now to heal the breach between the religious forces. Union meetings were arranged in which all the churches of the town were invited to take part. The meetings were held in our own church because it offered the most room. They were not of the usual evangelistic type, but conversions were, nevertheless, stressed, and some of the men who had supported the saloons, not only politically, but practically by patronizing them, were saved for a sober life.

Anti-Saloon Work in Chicago.—I have stated before that I did not accept the responsibility for anti-saloon work while at Berne because it did not appeal to me altogether. I had, however, done some of the anti-saloon work while at school in Evanston. Dr. Parkhurst, who was then the Chicago superintendent of the Anti-Saloon League, had asked for a man who could use the German language to help in the anti-saloon work. I was given a very hard field when I was sent to the north part of the city of Chicago and assigned to a German Baptist church. I discovered that quite a number of these German Baptists were actual supporters of the saloons, and that the Anti-Saloon League work, therefore, was an unpromising job. Carrie Nation tactics did not invite me. From there I was sent to Naperville, Illinois, to work in an Evangelical church. The people of that community were in favor of the Anti-Saloon League work, but I happened to arrive at the place when a very definite division, which resulted in the splitting of the church had taken place among the Evangelical people, and work was not easy. I did not remain in the work long

at Naperville, however. I terminated my work with the Anti-Saloon League before I took up the pastorate in Wadsworth, Ohio.

Carrie Nation.—I recall that one time one of my deacons of the Wadsworth, Ohio, Church and I were on the way to a conference in Trenton, Ohio. When the train stopped at a place to take on some new passengers, a woman entered, and my deacon remarked that she looked like Carrie Nation. The woman overheard the remark. She turned back to us and said, "Mister, I heard you say that I look like Carrie Nation. I have a reason; she is my mother." After a while a man who came in with the woman who had entered said, "I am the husband of Carrie Nation. Carrie is a very clever woman, but she is not a woman who will make a home happy." When he said that, I recalled an incident about Carrie Nation, as I had met her at the Union Station in Kansas City. She looked about herself and saw a number of men smoking. She reached up to one of the men, jerked the pipe out of his mouth, and threw it away with a great deal of disgust. Later when I came to Berne, Indiana, and had occasion to enter with some sympathy into the saloon fight, the words of Mr. Nation, that his wife, Carrie, had not made his home happy, came to me, and that was one of the reasons why I hesitated about entering the fight against the saloons there. I felt that maybe we were paying too much for "our whistle." As I have indicated above, we were paying for the saloon fight at the price of disrupting the churches at Berne.

Somewhat later, I had occasion to travel in the same train with Purly A. Baker, at that time the sec-

retary of the Anti-Saloon League. I recall asking him the question, "What do you find the hardest experience in your work?" Without a moment's hesitation he answered, "To fight and keep sweet." In alluding to the work of Mr. Rohrer in fighting the saloons, I might have said that in a most remarkable way he could fight and keep sweet, but I feel it was expecting too much of human nature that one should fight and keep sweet, unless he had recognized it as a special mission to enter that work.

I recall that one time we had as a visitor in our pulpit at Berne, Indiana, S. H. Hadley, who is known for his book, *Down in the Water Street Mission*. A good sister of our church asked Mr. Hadley, "Mr. Hadley, when you meet people in your travels, you always talk to them about their soul's welfare, don't you?" He disappointed her very much, I suppose, by responding, "No, my dear sister, I won't be as unwise as that. I surely must wait for the Spirit to tell me when to speak and what to say." Mr. Hadley showed a great deal of sanity and sobriety by indicating to that well-meaning sister that even enthusiasm should be held in leash.

CHAPTER VIII

BETHEL COLLEGE

First Board Members.—It must be confessed that when the friends of Bethel College started the school, they had no idea what financial undertaking would be connected with the institution. Fortunately, the Bethel College Board of that time had several men who were experienced in finances. The first president of the board was Mr. J. J. Krehbiel; the first secretary, Rev. David Goerz; and the first treasurer, Mr. B. Warkentin; all of Newton. They were men of outstanding ability, who put their whole soul into the work.

Rev. David Goerz, always the most aggressive of the board and a very versatile man, had been successful in various endeavors. He started the Mennonite Mutual Fire Insurance Company. It is today the largest mutual company in the state of Kansas. Repeatedly folks said that Reverend Goerz would have been a good lawyer. He had the facility of knowing at what people were driving. Very often when some man would start an argument and stop because he could not see his way clear ahead, Reverend Goerz would suggest what the man had really wanted, and usually the man would nod assent.

Mr. B. Warkentin, who was the first treasurer of the board, supervised the erection of the main building. He stood in high favor with the farmers because he had been instrumental in bringing Turkey wheat into Kansas. Subsequently, Turkey wheat had become quite a source of income for them. During the construction of the main building he could, therefore, suggest some expenses concerning which otherwise he would have been compelled to remain quiet.

Mr. J. J. Krehbiel, the first president of the board, was known to be the optimist of the group. When others were at a total loss as to what to do and were giving up all hopes, Mr. Krehbiel would say, "There is still another way. Try it." And his optimism would often bring good cheer.

Another of the older members of the board was Rev. J. W. Penner of Hillsboro, Kansas. He had been quite active in the Home Mission Board of the District Conference and had gained the confidence of other folks. In spite of broken health, and later broken fortune, he supported Bethel College until he was past ninety years of age.

The First President.—The first president of the school, Rev. C. H. Wedel, said that he had no business inclinations and therefore paid little attention to that angle of the institution. His strong point was in books, and in that field he occupied an outstanding position. An incident in connection with the meetings which he held in Berne, Indiana, comes to my mind. In the discussion of one of his lectures, there came up, quite incidentally, a subject which, as far as I know, he had not planned to discuss. A question was raised in ref-

erence to the preaching to the dead after Christ's resurrection. I recall how one of the pastors in the church in the town asked President Wedel's interpretation of that somewhat obscure passage in the Bible which makes reference to such service. President Wedel at once cited a number of authorities who held the one view; then he cited a number who held the other; then he cited the third number who held the middle view. After the meeting the pastor who had raised the question asked me whether I, in my correspondence with President Wedel, had written him to be ready to discuss that particular question. I happened to have a copy of that letter with me and showed him the terms of the engagement. Nothing was mentioned about the question. The preacher said, "What a store of knowledge that man must have to discuss at a moment's notice such a subject!" But when it came to questions aside from scholastic knowledge, he did not claim to be ready nor very dependable.

I recall that on one of the last visits I paid President Wedel, he broached the question of whether it might not be all right to make a girls' school out of the college, because the boys caused the most trouble; and it was in connection with the same visit that he advocated a limited contact with the city of Newton. Both of these were thoughts that would not be entertained by the constituency of Bethel College today, but he raised them with all seriousness. President Wedel was a most thorough scholar, but he did not have the capacity of "bringing out" the student, as Prof. H. H. Ewert had had in the Halstead school, or as Professor Kruse had had here at Bethel.

President C. H. Wedel was always modest, almost to a fault. When on a certain Sunday he preached in one of the churches here in Newton for the first time, he mentioned that the audience would have to bear with him because he did not have full command of the English language. A man who had listened to the fine sermon was then heard to say, "If he preaches that kind of sermon when he hasn't full command of the English language, what would he do if he thought he had full command of it?"

Later Presidents.—Prof. J. H. Langenwalter, who followed Rev. C. H. Wedel in the presidency temporarily, was a great enthusiast and was capable of creating enthusiasm. Unfortunately, his health did not stand up under the burden.

The writer followed Dr. Langenwalter in the presidency of the school. A good friend counselled me that I was a "Jack-of-too-many-trades" and was the master of none, and he warned me that I would wear out. I countered by the remark that I would rather wear out than rust out. He replied by saying, "Whether you wear out or rust out, you will be out."

Another president of the college was Dr. J. E. Hartzler, who served after Dr. Langenwalter resigned. Dr. Hartzler was a most wonderful speaker, but so often his weakness lay near to his strength. I have often thought of him and his ability in comparison with the Hon. William J. Bryan, a number of times presidential candidate. Mr. Bryan was an unusual speaker, but even when I had a chance to do so, I never voted for him as president because I felt that the presidential duties would be too confining for him. In somewhat

the same way I had to think of President Hartzler. He, to my mind, has been the most outstanding speaker of all Mennonite men that I have known, but he was a bit in danger of being drawn away from administrative duties when an opportunity came to deliver an address. Later, as president of Witmarsum Seminary, he showed the same tendency.

Faculty.—Prof. G. A. Haury was very likely the most widely-read person of any of our faculty members at that time. Unfortunately, too, he had to carry too many duties. Besides being the secretary of the faculty, he taught a number of subjects. His leading subject was Latin, but I used to say that he did not occupy only a chair but a whole settee.

Prof. P. J. Wedel was a quiet but efficient worker. He did more than any other man to prepare the minds of our people for the erection of the Science Hall.

Other outstanding faculty members were B. F. Welty in the Music Department, whose "Welty Home" was given in his commemoration; Emil Riesen, now dean of the College of Liberal Arts of the University of Arizona; A. B. Schmidt, now teaching in the University of Arizona; J. F. Balzer, who later for many years taught at Carlton College; C. C. Regier, who is now teaching in the University of West Virginia; and Samuel Burkhart, now teaching in the Teacher's College at Tempe, Arizona. Unfortunately, at the time these men were working together in the faculty, there occurred what a number of them have called "the explosion." As a result of this uncomfortable incident a number of the members of the faculty looked for another field of usefulness and found it without much trouble.

My Preparation for Presidency.—I must confess that previous to my being called to the presidency of Bethel College I had had no experience in administrative work in a college. Repeatedly I had been engaged in work very closely bordering the duties of a president, and I think they gave me some preparations for the duties of such an office. For instance, for a number of years I served as president of the Board of Trustees of Bluffton College. I used to go with Mr. J. F. Lehman annually to audit the books of Bluffton College. I believe that the work done was mostly that of Mr. Lehman, but I could keep my eyes and ears open and learn. We checked up quite thoroughly on the financial reports of the school. We always spent at least several days at it. In those days before the automobile, we used to make the trip by train, going from Berne, Indiana, by way of Lima, Ohio.

Again, for some time I was sent out into the field to do some collecting for the college. I do not boast of any outstanding success in that direction, and still, I may have contributed my share in keeping the school afloat for several years.

Furthermore, I was instrumental in helping to secure one of the largest gifts that was ever given to Bluffton College. I was called to Ashland, Ohio, to serve at the funeral of a Mennonite woman, Mrs. Yoder, who passed away there and was buried at Haysville, Ohio. The minister of another denomination conveyed me to the place of the burial, and he informed me that we were passing the home of John Herschler, who was a Mennonite, a man of means, and should be approached to give some of his means for a Mennonite cause. I

put myself in touch with Dr. N. C. Hirschy, who was at that time president of Bluffton College. He succeeded in interesting Mr. and Mrs. Herschler in a gift for Bluffton College. Dr. Hirschy, Mr. J. F. Lehman, and I subsequently visited the Herschler couple at Ashland, Ohio, and the gift was signed over to the college with an annuity consideration.

Finally, I also had a share in calling Dr. S. K. Mosiman to the presidency of the college, after Dr. Hirschy resigned. I remember very definitely that I also suggested Prof. E. J. Hirschler as a teacher of mathematics at Bluffton College. He has been holding that position up to the present time, and has also served as registrar of the school.

I must confess that I have never enjoyed the drumming up of money for financial support of the school. In fact, I do not think it a mere coincidence that my health collapse followed very closely an effort to raise money. In the summer of 1932, I forced myself to make a visit in various eastern cities, looking for leads for finances for the college. I visited in the cities of Washington, Philadelphia, New York, New Haven, Boston, and Detroit, but I came back without results. Although the reception that met me was very fine, the refusals were quite definite also. The following fall, on October 16, 1932, my health collapse came.

Opposition.—An institution of this sort must expect opposition. Bethel College has had its share. A later president of the board, who was very faithful in his service and who, though his school knowledge was but limited, put to use every bit of knowledge he had of that type, was Rev. Abraham Ratzlaff of Buhler, Kan-

sas. He supported every constructive suggestion of which he could honestly approve. He was always conciliatory in spirit but never compromising. I recall how, one time when Mr. R. A. Goerz was quite explosive in his remarks in opposition to another member who he apparently thought retarded progress, Reverend Ratzlaff answered, "Brother Goerz, don't be so severe," and then in a somewhat quieter tone, "but I am with you in my sentiments."

Fortunately, the faculty members were mostly ardent supporters of Bethel College. One exception has to be registered. We had a German professor here who was rather European. He did not seem to sense the entire situation that our school had to face even during the period of anti-German sentiment of the war. He was of a dogmatic turn of mind, also in matters of doctrine, and that finally led to trouble. He started a very unwise and unchristian quarrel with another faculty member. The other faculty member could not favor the German teacher's outlook with reference to the prospect of the war. The students, who were not in agreement with the German teacher's pedagogic method, made the situation still more difficult. Later the German professor was careless enough to oppose the other man in one of his chapel talks. He came to the president of the school afterwards and was looking for a word of sanction of the open refutation he had made to the other man's speech. The president, instead of giving him that word of sanction, gave him a severe word of reprimand. Then the German professor burst out, "Why, Brother Kliever, you are the one man on whom I depended for support in my stand on the right

theological faith, and here you are reprimanding me for it."

I responded by saying, "Yes, my reprimanding has come too late. I should have made my reprimand before the school right after you made your attack on the other teacher." The upshot of the thing was that the college board asked the German professor to leave. He did so, but before leaving, he threatened the board that that would not be the last they heard of this question. Later he wanted to bring the matter before the Conference, but the chairman of the Conference held that the school corporation would instruct the college board in matters of this kind.

More and more, it became evident to me that my work as president of Bethel College would force me to clash with the attitude of certain individuals who seemed to be determined to oppose every effort undertaken at a forward movement for the college. They insisted upon having Bethel College be a "conference school." My contention was that history had not proved that a conference school would necessarily be more of a success than the school built upon the plan that had hitherto obtained in the support of Bethel College. Wadsworth had been a conference school, but it had failed in spite of that fact.

When the question arose about the erection of a memorial building, I advised an auditorium as a memorial building, but the leading exponent of the opposition advised a Mennonite Historical Library. It developed very soon that the control of the library should go largely into the hands of the Mennonite Historical Society, which, however, was almost non-existent at

that day, as only a few persons belonged to that organization. The intention was to give as much control to the Mennonite Historical Society as would be had by Bethel College, although the building was to be erected on the Bethel College grounds. I feared at once that the proposal might develop into all sorts of hazards to the school. Finally the whole plan fell through.

In April of 1932 a meeting held in the Newton city auditorium was called as a special session of the Western District Conference where the opposition made an attempt to prove that Bethel College was within "ten thousand dollars of a financial collapse." This was based on the assumption that \$100,000 formerly contributed by the Conference could at will of the Conference be withdrawn from the school. After a long and heated debate the Conference decided not to sustain that assumption by a vote of 149 to 131. About the same time, another meeting was held by a small group of the opposition at which plans were discussed for calling into being a Bible school which was to be organized soon, and which was to be partly supported by the one hundred thousand dollars that the conference had voted for the support of Bethel College. Printed copies of the proposed charter were circulated. Fortunately, better counsel prevailed and the plan for closing Bethel and for opening another school collapsed.

For some years I advocated that we would have to try to get non-Mennonite support of the school and to get the school accredited. I had advised at the annual meetings of our corporation to aim to meet the requirements of the North Central Association. This advice met with opposition, and at times the opposition

was couched in words which were intended to leave the impression that a school accredited by the North Central Association could not be absolutely Mennonite in spirit. I gradually became convinced that it would take a dynamic person to push an unpopular cause like this. I tried to resign from my position to make room for another person who would carry the thing to success where I had failed to succeed. The matter, however, was dropped for the time being. On a previous occasion I had resigned the presidency to travel in the Orient in the interest of the General Conference missions. Upon my return I yielded to the pressure of taking up the presidency once more. Now again I offered to resign but was encouraged to stay on.

To make a successful opposition to some of the movements launched against the progressive movements of Bethel College demanded more strength than was left in me, and I was threatened with a physical breakdown. As I felt my strength slipping, I had to make room for some more robust leadership at Bethel. I realized that opposition had undermined the health of Rev. D. Goerz. I felt that it was undermining my health. The question, of course, arose as to whether our constituency would permit that my successor be hindered in the same way.

Among the teachers at Bethel College who had made an impression on my mind was the present president of the school, Dr. Ed. G. Kaufman. I recall the day that I had a share in advising the board to elect Dr. Kaufman to the position. For years I was watching his career. I recall when he was still an undergraduate in Bethel College, that out of a number of

three judges choosing a representative for our school in a debate, I was the one that pushed Ed. G. Kaufman. The other two men were not certain that he would make us a good man. One of the men stated that Kaufman was too insistent. I answered, "That is what we want a debater to be." But the man responded, "He might prejudice the judges against him." I said, "Convincing should be his aim."

Mr. Kaufman went from Bethel to the state university and was put on the debate team there. The debate was arranged with the University of Colorado, meeting at Boulder. The telegram which reported that Kansas had won over Colorado included the remark: "Due to Kaufman's logic and oratory." I felt that the judgment I rendered previously had been vindicated. A number of years later, I saw him at work in the China mission field and felt very much impressed by his efforts. When the time came to elect my successor, I had no hesitancy in recommending him for the place, and it seems to me that he is winning out against odds and opposition and that he is making an excellent executive administrator.

The Resignation.—I was greatly interested and made strenuous efforts to gain Bethel's admittance to the North Central Association, but before long it became obvious that the strain was too great for my advancing years. In the spring of 1932, I, therefore, resigned from the presidency and Dr. Kaufman became my successor. Soon thereafter the Bethel College Church asked me to serve as their pastor, which I did until my health gave way to such a degree that I had to give up that position also.

CHAPTER IX

IN THE SHADOWS OF DEATH

On October 16, 1932, I got up noticing that something had happened to me while I was asleep the night before. My left side did not function as usual, and my speech was impeded. It was a Sunday morning, and I went through my Sunday morning program as usual, but my audience noticed that I was speaking with difficulty. When, on the following day, I consulted the physician, he told me what was the matter and sent me to bed at once. When I asked him how long I would have to stay there, he said, "We'll keep that quiet, but you'll stay there as long as we find it necessary for you to stay." My case was painless but a great trial of patience. I had always boasted that I never spent a day in bed because I was always in the finest of health. This time, however, I stayed in bed from October 16 until December 24. Gradually I noticed a slight improvement, but every exertion left its effect on me. My wife proved an excellent nurse, but she was called to her heavenly home on January 2, 1935. The setback that I suffered from the experience of my wife's departure made my improvement very doubtful. I had to lay down my work gradually. I

had already resigned from the college presidency; now I had to resign from the pastorate of the church, and soon after from the Foreign Mission Board.

Now I am waiting for the release that will come to me also. I trust that I will be ready when the call "home" comes. It may be that some of the things that I have written in these memoirs would better have been locked in my heart and carried to the grave. I have long since forgiven and I know that I also need to be forgiven. However, I have often been accused of not saying enough and of trying to carry troubles all by myself without sharing them with others. I have written rather freely in these pages and been more outspoken than usual, not so much to meet the above referred-to accusation, but rather in the hope that more light on various aspects of these problems would lead to better understanding and fuller appreciation of the far-reaching issues involved. Only so will it be possible, by the grace of God, to unify our people to a greater degree in a more whole-hearted support of Bethel College and other causes making for the upbuilding of Christ's Kingdom on earth.

CHAPTER X

IN APPRECIATION

In the spring of 1932 when Dr. Kliewer's resignation as president of Bethel College became known, a small group of coworkers on the faculty suggested that the alumni members write short letters in appreciation of the services rendered by Doctor Kliewer. These letters were sent to the secretary of the Alumni Association, bound in book form entitled *In Appreciation*, and presented to Dr. Kliewer at the annual meeting of the Alumni Association held in May, 1932. These letters give a vivid picture of Dr. Kliewer's true personality and character as seen by students and fellow workers and are herewith printed in alphabetical order with Dr. Kliewer's permission.

E. G.K.

* * * * *

Hillsboro, Kansas
May, 1932

Dear Alumni Secretary:

To every loyal alumnus the welfare of his Alma Mater is a matter of real concern. Since the head of an institution is greatly responsible for the type and character of the same, the Bethel College alumni ought to feel grateful for those men who have guided their Alma Mater successfully up to the present time.

To head an educational institution, especially a denominational college, is a very difficult task. To uphold the purpose of the original founders of the institution and also not to lose sight of meeting the ever-changing educational requirements calls for much tact and wisdom. This difficult task has been admirably performed by Dr. J. W. Kliever, the now retiring president of our Alma Mater. In spite of the present world depression and social disorder in general, he has never lost sight of the needs and welfare of Bethel College. He has put forth much effort to effect the permanent accrediment of Bethel College and in many respects these efforts have been successful, a fact for which every alumnus ought to feel greatly indebted to him.

His willingness to lay the helm of the institution upon younger shoulders in the interest of Bethel College is a further evidence of his devotion to the institution. May his guiding influence make itself felt also in years to come.

Abraham Albrecht

Beatrice, Nebraska
May 21, 1932

Dear Dr. Kliever:

Every Bethelite is indebted to you, Dr. Kliever, for the service you have rendered to the furtherance of Christian education. We gladly avail ourselves of this opportunity to express our sincere appreciation. Mrs. Andreas feels especially grateful for the privilege of studying and teaching under your able leadership for a period of years. It is our hope and prayer that you may continue to be a blessing to others for many years to come.

Very sincerely yours,
Mr. and Mrs. W. C. Andreas

Bennington, Kansas
May 20, 1932

Dear Dr. Kliever:

It was with deep regret that I read of your leaving Bethel College. I wish it were possible to express the extent of your services rendered at Bethel. I shall always consider myself very fortunate to have attended Bethel while you were President, and also to have had a class with you. To me there will always be a vacancy at Bethel. I am greatly indebted to you for a better understanding of things pertaining to the moral and spiritual life.

Mrs. Baergen and I certainly regret to see you leave but hope that the Almighty will continue to use you as a blessing in the lives of other poeple.

Yours very truly,
Samuel Baergen

Northfield, Minnesota
May 16, 1932

Dear President Kliever:

My acquaintance with you goes back to a period previous to the time when you were instrumental in calling me to my first college teaching work. At that time I held you in deep respect, and during the happy five years of work with you my respect for you greatly increased. Under the most trying circumstances you always remained the friendly and considerate superior in office but the trusted comrade. Your compromises, so necessary in a rich life, were always made in the interests of a cause and never to save yourself.

I know that many will join with me in agreeing that you have become an important factor in the preservation of sound educational ideals at a time when such ideals could be maintained only at the price of a great personal sacrifice.

Your continued services in connection with the campus church will insure to our people for some time to come the contribution that you are in a position to make as a wise religious leader and guide during these troublesome days.

May you continue to enjoy the rich rewards of your spiritual ministry. Mrs. Balzer joins me in these greetings and good wishes.

Yours very cordially,
J. F. Balzer

Newton, Kansas
May, 1932

Dear Dr. Kliever:

To every man there openeth
A way and ways, and a way,
And the high soul climbs the high way
And the low soul gropes the low;
And in between on the misty flats
The rest drift to and fro.
But to every man there openeth
A high way and a low,
And every man decideth
The way his soul shall go.

Those of us who have had an opportunity to come into contact with your life are indeed happy to attempt to express our appreciation for your noble influence. Words seem inadequate when one wishes to express the inmost emotions of the soul. When for the first time I heard the above poem, it suggested your personality to me. Your life has at all times given indications of the "high soul."

You have the quality of personality that calls forth the best in others, not only in their presence, but your influence for good is of the enduring sort. Many and many have been the times when both Paul and I have admired your wise counsel, your sound judgment, your calm reserve, and, above all, your kindness and charity in the face of opposition and discouragement. May we ever be worthy of your friendship.

Sincerely your friends,

Anna Miller Baumgartner
Paul Baumgartner

Newton, Kansas
May, 1932

Dear Alumni Secretary:

It has been said of great souls that they

"live so grandly, fight so bravely, endure so patiently, suffer so uncomplainingly, work so faithfully, and shine so constantly that wherever they are they are pole stars by which the multitudes may steer their barques."

"They are the blessed sweeteners of society.

They are the faithful supporters of leaders of all good movements.

They initiate. They lead off. They have a vision. They know a task and its meaning. They work in the light of God.

They take responsibilities seriously and discharge them gloriously. They make things happen.

They are wonderful as friends and advisers. They speak from experience. They have ripened characters.

Through years of suffering, sacrifice, and service they have grown great.

They have a storehouse full of rich reminiscences. It is great to listen to them speak. They have something to say and say it well.

Sometimes they become the channels of literary

inspiration and song. Books are often born of their souls."

These words seem to me most fitting in thinking of Dr. Kliewer as one of the great souls who has lived, loved, sacrificed, and served all these years as our beloved president. May the Lord continue to bless this "great soul" and may many more lives be enriched as ours have been, through the coming years!

With grateful appreciation,
Mollie Becker

Newton, Kansas
May, 1932

Dear Dr. Kliewer:

I take great delight in expressing my impressions regarding you and your service here at Bethel College. I think first of all of your personality. Your serene temperament, self-composure, dignity, consistent reserve, and congenial friendliness have left a deep and lasting impression upon me.

Your example as a devoted, self-sacrificing, and Christ-like worker for the interest of a Christian institution will ever linger in my memory as an inspiration to nobler service.

Ben Bergen

Newton, Kansas
May, 1932

Dear Dr. J. W. Kliewer:

It is with a great deal of satisfaction that we join your many friends in the expression of our appreciation to you, Brother Kliewer, for your fine spirit of Christian idealism in the ministry as well as in the field of education and missions. We who have had the privilege to live on the campus found that it was easy to get acquainted with you, and the better we learned to know you, the more we loved you. Your mental and spiritual poise, your clarity of thought which enables you to preach sermons full of creative ideas so that one never gets tired of your sermons, and your Christian modesty have been a great inspiration to me and my family. And now that you are again our pastor, we pledge to you our Christian loyalty and pray that God may bless you abundantly with His spirit.

With best wishes,
J. P. Baehr

Larned, Kansas
May, 1932

Dear Alumni Secretary:

As one who has had the privilege of studying in Bethel College for four years under the leadership of Dr. Kliever, I very much regret to lose an able and capable leader.

It has always been an inspiration to me to note the undying and untiring efforts put forth by Dr. Kliever for his respective cause. This is one of the many ideals as set forth by Dr. Kliever that I, in my humble ways, am trying to follow.

Dr. Kliever's outlook in life was of such a sound nature that I was always happy and pleased to confer with him on any life problem.

Honesty, sincerity, faithfulness are other virtues which I hope will be revealed by all the alumni, as was set forth by Dr. Kliever.

John Buller, Jr.

Chicago, Illinois
May 19, 1932

Dear Dr. Kliever:

In reflecting on the time spent at Bethel I find that after forgetting history dates and mathematical formulas the memory of you as a personal influence remains. Although I was there a comparatively short time I remember that you were always interested in the individual student as well as the entire body. Your comments to me in my fiddling here and there were a source of inspiration which still lives. The association with Paul, especially in the last couple of years since we both are away from home, gives me much pleasure and also perpetuates your influence. I am glad for this opportunity to express my appreciation.

Very sincerely,
Kenneth Byler

Chicago, Illinois
May 18, 1932

Dear Dr. Kliever:

It is a pleasure to send you my greetings along with the many others you are receiving at this time. Although my personal contacts with you at Bethel were not many, I have profited much from your good influence over me and consider myself fortunate to have had the association. I always enjoy your visits to Chicago, usually at the "Ontra" with Paul, and

hope that your new assignment will permit us to see you here at least as often as in the past.

A couple of weeks ago I enjoyed a visit with Ruth in Berkeley and can readily understand why she is so fond of her work there. From all appearances she certainly is getting on famously, and that is the report I gave Paul when I got back to Chicago.

With kindest regards and best wishes for your continued happiness and success, I am

Yours very sincerely,
Shirley Byler

Cherokee, Oklahoma
May, 1932

Dear Alumni Secretary:

It was my privilege while attending Bethel to spend a year in the home of Dr. Kliewer. I recall with pleasure his gracious wife and interesting children and found the president at home the same steadfast personality one sees manifest in all his public endeavor.

Parthenia Ratzlaff Defevers

Wichita, Kansas
May, 1932

Dear Alumni Secretary:

Few people possess the personal qualities which naturally enlist the admiration, the respect, and the allegiance of every class of people. Dr. J. W. Kliewer is one of the few.

Dr. Kliewer's understanding of the ideals and the prejudices of all classes of people interested in Bethel College is matchless. His firm convictions regarding the proper procedure to insure adequate educational opportunity for youth coupled with deliberate consideration of diverse opinions have, at the same time, brought Bethel College an enviable reputation for work of high standard and have made Bethel-boosters of apparent foes.

To know Dr. Kliewer is to know a truly wholesome and admirable personality; to have attended Bethel College is to have profited by those things made possible by his personality and his sincere devotion to the cause of educational progress.

Such influence enlarges.

Sincerely,
Mr. and Mrs. J. K. Dirks

Arma, Kansas
May, 1932

Dear Alumni Secretary:

Tactfulness, sacrifice, broadmindedness, understanding of modern youth, and honesty made the services of Dr. Kliever paramount in the past history of Bethel College, our Alma Mater.

Mrs. Geo. N. Duerksen (Viola Krehbiel)

The clear and enviable qualities of genuine management and well-planned judgment are outstanding in the calm disposition of Dr. J. W. Kliever.

Geo. N. Duerksen

Washington, D. C.
May 16, 1932

My Dear Professor:

At many an occasion your personal presence inspired me with awe and admiration for your systematized life plans and straightforwardness in action.

Your sermons were rich and nourishing for thought and meditation. I still crave for your thought-provoking ideas. Words can only suggest what you have meant in my life.

With love and admiration,
Jacob A. Duerksen

Chihuahua, Chile, Mexico
May, 1932

Dear Alumni Secretary:

Drummond has said, "Greatness is, take the common things of life and walk truly among men."

To me Dr. Kliever's teachings and life are an expression of "greatness" as defined by Drummond.

Often in my dealings with young people here in Mexico, I have wished that they could come in contact with a life like Dr. Kliever's, in order to grasp the spirit of true greatness and service to mankind.

Anna Belle Dyck

Halstead, Kansas
May, 1932

Dear Dr. Kliever:

In gratitude to you for your service to Bethel and to myself:

What could one say—one who has had the happiness

of being a student under you—a coworker—a member of your congregation—even the privilege of calling you “Uncle Kliewer”?

When I look back towards Bethel, always over and above all stands out the fineness of you, the leading and guiding of you, the satisfaction of knowing that you were equal to any occasion with a most fitting thought, just the right word, the right length, the right time—something so said that I could carry it along, unencumbered with a lot of detail out of which it must be sorted.

In the words of a teacher who had spent much time in larger places, “To think I should find, away out here in the West in a small school, such a superior, satisfying teacher and pastor. I have found none better.”

May I thank you personally for the poise and fineness of yourself which I have been privileged to enjoy, to know, and imbibe.

Sincerely,

Cora Molzen Haury Dyck

Buhler, Kansas

May, 1932

Dear Alumni Secretary:

A TRIBUTE

The services of Dr. Kliewer to Bethel College can not be classed as ordinary, but as extraordinary. To my mind he has shown himself and will always be remembered as an outstanding character in the personnel of Bethel College. I can sincerely say that no other single person has meant so much to me and has made such a deep impression upon my life during my college days, or for that matter during my whole educational career, as Dr. Kliewer. I am sure there are hosts of others who feel the same way. I consider it an unusual privilege to have been under his influence. He has impressed me as a man of poise, balance, and sane judgment as very few men have. What he has meant to me I am sure he has meant to Bethel College as a whole. Bethel may justly be proud of having had Dr. Kliewer at its head for so many years.

It certainly has not been an easy task that Dr. Kliewer has had in guiding the affairs of Bethel through the various storms of criticism and financial difficulties that have become a part of her history. Bethel, therefore, is deeply indebted to Dr. Kliewer for the services and sacrifices that

he has made in her behalf. God alone is able justly to reward him for this.

P. E. Frantz

Newton, Kansas
May, 1932

Dear President Kliever:

May I on this occasion express my sincere appreciation of the services you have rendered our Alma Mater as its president. Under your administration Bethel College has developed into what it is today. Your influence has gone to the ends of the earth.

I deem it a special privilege to have been one of your faculty members during the past seven years. Your encouragement and the fact that you have made it possible for me to prepare myself for better service during this time I will always remember with gratitude towards you.

We, my family and I, learn with much pleasure that you have accepted the pastorate of the Bethel College Mennonite Church. May we extend to you our hand of welcome? Hoping that thus we faculty members, our families, and the student body may continue to be under your influence for many years to come, I remain

Yours very sincerely,
A. P. Friesen

Mercy Hospital, Parsons, Kansas
May 21, 1932

My Dear Dr. Kliever:

This note is to assure you of my admiration of the splendid work in which you are engaged and to wish you still further successes.

Sincerely,
Sister M. Gabriel

Ellis, Kansas
May 18, 1932

Dear Dr. Kliever:

Though good fortune has never been mine
To sail the seas and oceans wide
When thou at the helm of the "Bethel Line"
Didst guide its ships through every tide,
And safely into harbor its crew didst bring—
Yet we, the passengers of that line,

Our praise and thanks to thee do sing
For showing us how through service fine
We, too, our lives more richly may entwine—
With golden thoughts, with noble grace,
With actions true, and words that ease;
Thus our ship's honor may we ne'er deface.
May on this day thy efforts and accomplishments
Be truly acknowledged through pen and ink,
By words of cheer and by actions clear,
That thy services to our people are dear.
Well do we feel pleasantly at ease
When words at meetings thou dost release,
For we know that with grace and dignity
Thou wilt carry through with diligence.
For thy services to us—we thank thee.

Sincerely,

Lydia F. Gaeddert

Odessa, Washington
May 16, 1932

Dear Alumni Secretary:

IN APPRECIATION FOR THE SERVICES RENDERED BY
DR. J. W. KLIEWER, PRESIDENT OF BETHEL COLLEGE

As a student in the classes of Dr. Kliewer, his method of approach at each lesson and recitation, his teaching, his sincerity and quiet ways about himself have been a real inspiration to me for a life that is worth while.

How he would dig into the depths of the lesson thought has proven that the precious things and thoughts of life are never superficial but are found by the one who is willing to seek for them. Dr. Kliewer certainly found them and through his method of teaching taught us how to find these precious pearls. His way of entering into the depths has inspired me to devote a great deal of time digging into the depths of things worth while and that of our Lord Jesus Christ, in his teachings and life.

His sincere Christian life, which has influenced me throughout my college days, is still encouraging me in all the work I am permitted to render this day.

The Bible has become a precious book to me through his teachings. God, Jesus Christ, Holy Spirit, have become definite personalities to my life. Dr. Kliewer's quiet, thoughtful, unassuming life and manner of approach to all problems have been accepted as a model throughout my ministry. His

mission spirit is a living mesage and vital. His passion for the salvation of souls to Jesus Christ our Lord and their welfare today and the future has led me on to help the seeking one and find the needy.

At every opportunity and whenever within possible reach, I shall never fail to listen to the message Dr. Kliever will bring. His message is a living one since he receives it from the Life-giving Source, God. Every message is always a real refreshing of the spirit and an encouragement of the soul to continue in the great cause for Jesus Christ. In my twenty years of service at this date in the gospel ministry for our Lord, the life and spirit of Dr. Kliever have been one continuous thread of valuable associations which has had its beginning during my college days as a student in his classrooms, and these shall continue without a break or interruption. Had I a photograph of Dr. Kliever, it would find its place beside that of my father in my study. I hope some day to have this privilege.

Among the exceptionally few men whom I shall counsel for advice at any time, Dr. Kliever will be the first one. The church in which I may be serving will always have the open door for his entrance; and the pulpit will be ready to receive him every time for that living message which he knows how to bring to longing souls. The door to our home will be open all the time to welcome Dr. and Mrs. Kliever, and we trust they may be permitted to enter many a time and may find it a home.

May God spare Dr. Kliever for many a year to come; we need him; we need his services; we need his counsel.

M. J. Galle

Newton, Kansas

May 21, 1932

Dear Alumni Secretary:

The suggestion contained in your recent letter relative to the retiring president of Bethel College strikes me as very appropriate and well worth while.

The recent statement in the evening paper that Dr. John W. Kliever had resigned as President of Bethel was a decided shock to me, and cause for regret and grief. I have lived here in the community to see Bethel make great progress in the past thirty years. Having grown up from boyhood here in the glow of the culture, sincerity, and honest Christian convictions, which have radiated from this center of learning,

I fully appreciate the fact that the personality and influence of this great man stand out above all other friends of Bethel.

I have been associated with Dr. Kliever in the Rotary Club, on the Newton Board of Religious Education, and on various civic and Bethel committees. I have always found his judgment excellent and his friendly cooperative spirit a stimulus to accomplishment. I am very proud that his name appears on my Bethel diploma, and I am very glad he is planning to remain here in Newton among us. His presence will always be an influence for good. I am very proud of his friendship and of his accomplishments, and he has my very best wishes always.

Very sincerely yours,
Harold M. Glover

Newton, Kansas
May 20, 1932

Dear Dr. Kliever:

It must be gratifying to you to know that you are rounding out a very useful career as president of Bethel College. I am sure many an alumnus is pronouncing his benediction upon you for what you have meant to him and the school. I cannot speak as an alumnus, but allow me to express myself as a recent addition to the faculty. What I can say will necessarily be more or less personal.

I will remember you, first of all, as the man who brought me to Bethel. Aside from the sadness that came to me on April 28, 1931, of which you know, I consider these years at Bethel the happiest years of work since I came from China as a missionary. The fellowship has been uplifting, the work stimulating, and the experiences rich in content. I am in love with the larger Christian fellowship that can find expression here, and I am delighted with the missionary challenges that the situation presents.

May I tell you also that I have highly prized your gracious ways as my chief. I have appreciated the fact that you are approachable and always ready to share with me your best judgment and experience. The respect with which you have treated me and the confidence you have placed in me helped me more easily to adjust myself to the work and conditions at Bethel. And always have I found it possible to admire your tact in handling delicate and difficult situations.

My wish for you is that a number of years as preacher,

counselor, and friend may still lie ahead of you.

Fraternally yours,

P. S. Goertz

Topeka, Kansas

May, 1932

Dear Alumni Secretary:

Dr. Kliever's administrative term at Bethel College can be reviewed by his friends and friends of the school with a great deal of pride and satisfaction.

Dr. Kliever has unselfishly given his time, energy, and thought to the welfare and progress of Bethel College. He has never been stampeded by factions or classes or wild rumors which came to him from time to time. His cool and deliberate actions, his thoughtful and careful consideration of all matters have certainly been an asset to Bethel College and a wonderful influence to those who attended this school.

He has upheld the standards of education at Bethel College second to no other college in the state. My only hope is that Bethel College had more such friends and devoted donors of time, energy, thought, and money. I know of no other man in our denomination who holds the respect of so many people. His fairness in all matters whether church, state, or school, has won him the confidence of hundreds of people both in and out of our denomination. And the Mennonites of the United States are deeply indebted to him for his services.

I sincerely hope that Dr. Kliever will continue to take interest in our schools and churches in the future as he has in the past. His timely advice and help will be sought at all times.

Jonas W. Graber

Busby, Montana

May, 1932

Dear Alumni Secretary:

We are all indebted to a large number of people for the ennobling influence they had on our lives. There are many whom we have admired and loved. Many have shown a deep interest in our welfare, and we shall ever be humbly grateful to them and to our Heavenly Father. Among the ones who have enriched our thinking and inspired our aspirations we lovingly mention the name of Dr. J. W. Kliever.

It has been our providential good fortune to belong to the group of young people who were in their formative years when Dr. Kliever was pastor of the First Mennonite Church

of Berne, Indiana. His well-prepared sermons fed our hearts and minds; his catechetical instructions grounded us in the Holy Scriptures and gave us a basis of Christian philosophy. Under his ministry we came to love and adore our Lord and Savior, and dedicated our lives to sacrificial service for His kingdom. He administered the rite of baptism on us both, spoke words of hope and comfort to our hearts when Mother Habegger passed away, and later performed the marriage rites for us.

When we decided to prepare for the mission work, we were drawn to Bethel College because Dr. Kliever was there. We never regretted our choice but rather felt well received and well repaid for staying three years at Bethel College. Doctor Kliever here taught us the subjects of Christian philosophy and homiletics. He conferred on us the A.B. degrees.

With many the close of college days ended their close contact with Dr. Kliever. Not so with us. When we were to be ordained to the work of missionaries to the Northern Cheyennes, Dr. Kliever as president of the Foreign Mission Board preached the ordination sermon and performed the ordination. Since that time we have had the privilege of working in the mission field among the Northern Cheyennes in Montana, under the Mission Board. We have always had a sense of deep confidence in his judgment and good will. We have always admired his calm and reserved bearing and highly respected his opinion. He has ever filled each office entrusted to him with dignity and grace.

May the Giver of Life continue to bless Dr. Kliever with health and youthful vigor, that he may continue to uplift, to inspire, to instruct, and encourage the young people who will be privileged to listen to his words of wisdom. May those who shall be thus privileged continue to respond wholeheartedly to his teachings and advice.

May we who have taken into our lives of the water of life through his ministrations be found worthy disciples and thus glorify our Lord and Master, whom we thank for having privileged us to learn at the feet of so worthy a teacher, pastor, and supervisor.

Alfred Habegger
Barbara Hirschy Habegger

Gretna, Manitoba, Canada
May 17, 1932

Dear Brother Kliever:

A splendid opportunity is offered to me to do what

I have wanted to do for some time. This letter is to express my appreciation for the services rendered by you to me.

It was in March, 1928, when I met you for the first time. On that occasion I spoke to you about my entering Bethel College. At that time I was looking for a school where I could get that training which would make me more fit to serve my church. The talk that I had with you on that day convinced me that I should enroll in Bethel College in the coming fall. In September, 1928, I enrolled in Bethel College. I must say that I did not regret my coming to Bethel when the first semester closed.

Quite frequently I visited your office, and I must say that your friendly and brotherly attitude has meant much to me. Very often I have left your office encouraged and ready to take up my work more bravely than before. After a talk with you the trouble, problem, or question did not seem so big as I thought it to be when I came to you. That you were very patient and considerate with me I have noticed more than once. I am still thankful to you for the conversation we had on the topic "pep meeting" and some such matters that were strange and new to me at that time.

I will always think of you when I think of my Alma Mater. Why do I like Bethel College? It is because Bethel has given me a chance and the opportunity to do good. Your last word to us on commencement in 1930, "We will rejoice with you when you succeed and feel sorry when you fail," rings in my ear and will, I think, as long as I live. For almost two school terms I have now held a very hard position here in Canada, and at times when it seemed that I would fail, it is this statement that has made me try again.

May God reward you and bless you for the work that you have done for Bethel. "Vergelt's Gott." I love Bethel and the men and women who have given unselfish service to her.

Sincerely and truly yours,

H. N. Harder

Bethel College, Newton, Kansas
May, 1932

Dear Alumni Secretary:

The useful, active, and serviceable life of Dr. J. W. Kliever will not terminate with his severance as President of Bethel College. His high ideals, his inspiration and courage will be perpetuated in the lives of the thousands of students and teachers who have been enriched by having had contact with him.

J. M. Hofer

Newton, Kansas
May, 1932

Dear Dr. Kliever:

Your Christian character, leadership, clarity of thought, poise, and dignity I admired greatly as a student.

As a faculty member I have learned anew to appreciate and to respect these characteristics.

Walter H. Hohmann

Beatrice, Nebraska
May 16, 1932

My Dear Brother Kliever:

When the news came to me through Rev. H. T. Unruh that you have resigned as President of our beloved Bethel, my heart was deeply stirred. Most fervently did I hope and pray that our Lord may safely guide the destiny of our beloved school. This hope is realized and the prayers were answered.

It is a matter of great and deep gratification that you remain in touch with the school as President Emeritus and, above all, that you have accepted the pastorate of the Bethel College congregation. Thus you are placed in position of great and lasting spiritual influence over the students and others.

You, dear brother, have given the best part of your life to our school and to our General Conference mission interests. We do want to convey to you our very high appreciation for your valuable, faithful, and unselfish work. May He who is the Rewarder of all who sincerely serve Him abundantly reward and bless you.

May I say as a personal note, that since the good old Halstead days, I do value very highly your staunch and sincere friendship and I regard it as a great privilege to be a fellow-laborer with you, especially in our mission interests.

With sincerest greetings, *in alter Freundschaft*,
M. Horsch

Goessel, Kansas
May, 1932

Dear Dr. Kliever:

I believe it takes a man who leaves out unessentials and thinks in terms of fundamentals and essentials to keep the respect and admiration of so varied a group as you have always done.

Very sincerely,
Arnold G. Isaac

Odessa, Washington

May 20, 1932

Dear Dr. Kliever:

I cannot help feeling that what Bethel College has been in these past years is largely due to the hard, unselfish work of its president.

May Bethel College continue to progress as it has in the past years.

P. C. Jantz

Newton, Kansas

May 21, 1932

Dear Dr. Kliever:

With pleasure I look back upon the time that I could spend here at Bethel College. All the training I have received and the contacts I was privileged to make with the guiding professors, with the leaders of this institution, and with fellow-students have greatly enriched my life. Your influence in work and in play has always been a wholesome one. Through your daily life I have been led to a greater consecration to life's purpose and to our Heavenly Father. To me you will always seem as a father of the Bethel College family of which I am proud to be a member.

My prayer is that God may continue to bless you and the school of which you have been the guide for these many years and that the constant influence that radiates from such an institution may be to the glory of God and of service to humanity.

Sincerely,

Albert L. Jantzen

Lawrence, Kansas

May 16, 1942

Dear Dr. Kliever:

I remember very well the time when you accepted the presidency of Bethel College how the confidence in our school was regained, which seemingly we were on the verge of losing. Now you are withdrawing, not in defeat but in victory, leaving the school in the hands of younger men as a challenge to the future.

My personal thanks are extended to you for the unselfish and noble way in which you gave the best years of your life for the sake of our generation. My life has been inspired manifold by your words and actions, both toward

friend and foe. Such examples leave lasting impressions upon the lives of young people. We pray His richest blessings upon you for only He can give true reward and great satisfaction.

May your influence for Bethel remain a living factor and your life a growing source of inspiration for us all.

Sincerely your friend,
H. F. Janzen

Bethel College, Newton, Kansas
May 27, 1932

My Dear Dr. Kliever:

Whereas it is hard for some of us to express ourselves in a verbal, face-to-face fashion, I am very glad for the opportunity to do this on paper.

Besides God, my parents, and my wife, I know of no one to whom I owe so much as to you. This is true regarding the matter of getting a sane view of life as well as getting inspiration to live at my best. For the last twenty years you have been as a guiding star to me. This debt I will never be able to repay.

And now your mantle regarding Bethel College has fallen upon me, and I have not been able to shake it off. I covet your continued prayer and God's help that I may be worthy and able to carry forward the work at Bethel in His spirit and so in a measure do for others what you have done for me.

Very gratefully yours,
Ed. G. Kaufman

Newton, Kansas
May 22, 1932

Dear Alumni Secretary:

Dr. J. W. Kliever will always stand high in the memory and esteem of all who knew him.

He not only took a keen interest in the school as such, but in the welfare of each individual student as well.

As a leader he fearlessly stands for the right, holds firmly to the "Faith of our Fathers," and unflinchingly pursues his duty.

May God give us more fearless leaders!

In gratitude,
Katherine Krause Klassen

Chicago, Illinois
May, 1932

Dear Dr. Kliewer:

We wish to express our appreciation for all that you have meant to us and for all that you have done for us through the contribution you have made to Bethel by your noble consecration and self-sacrifice for her welfare.

Your high ideals and kind consideration of all were the standards of the school, and these, we hope, will be retained through the years to come. These standards meant much to us while in school, and their influence will always remain. For these we wish to thank you and voice our sincere appreciation.

Waldo H. Kliewer
Mrs. Waldo H. Kliewer (Mary R. Schmidt)

Hanston, Kansas
May, 1932

Dear Alumni Secretary:

Bethel College is indeed a loved and revered shrine and stands out as a fine cultural institution. But one would not confine his thoughts to the physical side of the institution, but to those who have served as its leaders.

We hereby extend our thanks and appreciation to Dr. Kliewer for his untiring and valuable service, for his influence and fatherly counsel. He has helped many to solve the greater problems of life.

We must and do feel grateful to admit that our lives have become enriched through the meeting and influence of this man.

We are pleased to learn that Dr. Kliewer will continue to be of further service to Bethel.

May God bless him and God only can reward him.

Sincere wishes from your friends,
John and Elizabeth Lingenfelder

Arlington, Kansas
May, 1932

Dear Alumni Secretary:

A depth of spirit that is a challenge to noble living; a sense of humor to break the tenseness of a trying moment; poise that can be maintained though half the ceiling fall down on his head; thoroughness in the classroom and withal kindness—these are some of the traits that characterize the man whom

we learned to love and respect as our college president.

Elizabeth K. Linscheid

Emma M. Linscheid

Bethel College, Newton, Kansas

May, 1932

My Dear Dr. Kliever:

Of course, you have forgotten this. Nevertheless, the first time I met you was in the spring of 1911 when you gave an evening lecture in the college chapel. We were told that you had come to acquaint yourself with the Bethel of that day, with the prospect of accepting the presidency. Incidentally, I recall you wore a Prince Albert coat. At the close of the service you were at the door greeting people as they passed out. Moyer got busy, rounded up a number of us, and urged us to tell you as we passed that we hoped you would be with us next year. Soon my great moment came. As I shook hands with you I grinned and stammered, "I hope to be one of your students next year." The answer was one I had not anticipated and one which quite non-plussed me: "Well, do you plan to come to Berne?"

I was one of your students the next year. It was my pleasure to be enrolled in both Apologetik and Dogmatik, and in those classes to become considerably disturbed, for the first time in my life, at the apparent lack of harmony in the time element between the literal creation epic of the Scriptures and the creation theory as it is suggested by geological science. (As I remember it, J. J. Friesen of Mountain Lake always asked the most thought-provoking questions.) I have always felt that, had I not had those two courses that year, I should have crashed upon the rocks, so far as my faith was concerned, when in the following year I took a course in geology at the University of Kansas under the most radical evolutionist the school claims ever to have had.

As it was a great pleasure to have been your student, so it has been to be a member of your staff. I do not want to make myself absurd by attempting any apologies; I frankly admit my shortcomings. May they have been long forgiven and maybe eventually forgotten. I am very grateful for the privilege I have enjoyed to come to you with my varied scholastic difficulties, always with the confidence that you would be ready to hear me and to give the counsel I sought. Needless to say that both my classes and I have profited by the consideration shown me.

I am happy to join in the many congratulations to

the school, to the church, and to the community on your willingness to remain with Bethel College, although it be in another capacity. You have passed the sceptre on to one of your disciples. May he and we all continue to avail ourselves of that wise counsel and unstinted kindness that, I trust, you will be ready to impart so generously in the future as you have in the past.

Sincerely and respectfully,
J. E. Linscheid

Sterling, Kansas
May, 1932

Dear Dr. Kliewer:

Seven years have elapsed since I left the halls of Bethel College. During that time I have had the privilege of helping to mold other young lives. Naturally, I have faced disappointments and met many problems, but through them all I have felt the inspiration and the moral courage which I received while at Bethel. I feel that much of this help has come through your personal influence.

I believe that I am the only college alumnus that had the unique experience of having been disciplined by you. This experience may have seemed hard at the time, but I realize now that your wise judgment in the matter has served me better to handle my administrative problems.

Gratefully yours,
P. R. Linscheid

McPherson, Kansas
May, 1932

Dear Dr. Kliewer:

In view of the fact that you are leaving Bethel College as its president, we herewith wish to express our appreciation and "thank you" for what you have meant to us as a teacher, preacher, comrade, and guide, and give you our "God bless you" along for your future.

We are glad that you are not leaving this particular community at present and will always be glad to see and hear you when occasion presents itself.

Mrs. Kliewer and the children have shared your tasks and joys, and it has been a real pleasure and blessing to us to have had their acquaintanceship.

May His guidance ever be yours.

Bethel College Alumni of 1916,
A. M. Lohrentz
Marie Wollmann Lohrentz

Central Province, India
May, 1932

Greetings:

We, the Bethel College ex-students and alumni in India, wish to extend our hearty thanks to you for the long and faithful service you have rendered our Alma Mater. May it please our heavenly Father to spare you many years for our church.

John Thiessen
P. J. Wiens
A. H. Wiens
F. J. Isaac
Anna Penner Isaac
Johanna Schmidt
P. W. Penner
Augusta Schmidt
Christena Harder Duerksen
J. R. Duerksen
H. E. Dester, M. D.
Clara L. Kuehny
Mrs. Pauline Schmidt Unruh
W. F. Unruh

Newton, Kansas
May 20, 1932

Dear Dr. Kliever:

It is indeed a pleasure (though a task to put into words) to give some of my personal reactions regarding the services you have rendered to my Alma Mater.

My first impressions of you, as seen in the halls, were of the strictest type of dignity—I knew that in Bethel there must be law and order—I again felt this from your chapel talks, though in them I also found a deep feeling of understanding of youth and student life.

Then in my final year at Bethel I came to know you as a personal friend upon your being class sponsor. I discovered anew the deepest of understanding and cooperation for the individual, the class, and the school. Most pleasant are the memories of my many welcome conferences with you and the continued interest and cooperation you have given to our class in its two years out of college.

Most gratefully,
Gladys Mitchell

Sylvia, Kansas
May 20, 1932

Dear Dr. Kliever:

Words cannot adequately express the appreciation for the services that you have rendered to us as alumni of Bethel College.

The message conveyed by you as teacher, minister, lecturer, and by your personal example has been and will continue to be an inspiration to many. In your capacity as administrator you have continually promoted the interests of Bethel College in a highly efficient manner.

Last but not least, you will always be remembered by Mrs. Nachtigal and me because on September 4, 1924, you launched us upon the sea of matrimony, which has meant nearly eight years of richest happiness and will, we hope, mean many more.

Sincerely,

Mr. and Mrs. G. A. Nachtigal

Memphis, Tennessee
May, 1932

Dear Alumni Secretary:

IN APPRECIATION OF DR. J. W. KLIEWER'S SERVICES
TO BETHEL COLLEGE

Through his sound judgment, tolerance, and wide vision, Bethel College has prospered steadily. His faith in God and man, his perseverance, and his high ideals have stimulated and inspired us all.

D. S. Pankratz

Newton, Kansas
May 30, 1932

Dear Dr. Kliever:

Bethel College with its faculty under your leadership has had a great part in the development of the Christian character of the Mennonite youth. I am very grateful to our school for giving me a broader outlook in life with the desire for Christian living.

All my connections with Bethel have been during your administration, and I wish to express to you my sincere appreciation of Bethel and your services with that institution.

If there was to be any change of positions I am very glad that you will remain on the campus and best of all that you have accepted the pastorate of the Bethel Church.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Penner

Beatrice, Nebraska
May 19, 1932

Dear Dr. Kliever:

As a member of the Alumni Association of Bethel College I want to thank you for the faith you have shown in Bethel College and for your efficient and faithful services.

Mrs. L. E. Penner

Newton, Kansas
May, 1932

Dear Dr. Kliever:

About thirty years ago I learned to know you, my dear J. W. I wonder whether you know that my life has been richer because of this acquaintance and friendship? I have known you as a student of Bethel College, as president of this institution, as pastor of its church, as president of the Foreign Mission Board. In all these capacities, which you have so creditably filled, my respect for you has increased as the days and years went by.

I am truly grateful that the opportunity is given me of saying to **you** what I have frequently said to others. Among your many outstanding characteristics that have impressed me there is one that I have always coveted and, with varying degrees of success, have imitated. I refer to your Christian attitude toward others. Whether understood or misunderstood, whether applauded or criticized, you were always the same quiet man. And even when speaking about those who could not see eye to eye with you on important matters, your words were always those of reserve and even respect. I have marveled at this, and if there is anything that has elicited my respect for you, it is that enviable trait in your Christian character. Remembering this and reviewing before me your life as I know it, I can pay you, my friend, no higher compliment than the one given to Barnabas: "He was a good man." Of one thing I am confident. Your life has enriched mine and that of others. The world is better because of your having lived in it for a while. May God's choicest blessings rest upon you, your family, and your vocation—

Bis es Abend wird fuer mich hinieden
Und Er ruft zum ew'gen Heimath hin,
Bis mit Ihm ich gehe ein zum Frieden,
Wo sein sel'gar Himmels-gast ich bin.
Then will come the "Well done" of the Master.

Your friend,

P. A. Penner

Your sterling Christian character has always been and always will be an inspiration to me.

Mariam Penner

Hutchinson, Kansas

May 17, 1932

Dear Dr. Kliever:

It has been my lot to do work in several colleges and particularly during the heat of many summers. I, perhaps like many others, chose Bethel for summer work because Newton is my home. The old adage about finding the best at home is true in this case. I prize my degree from Bethel higher than one I have from a much larger college; I feel that the associations with faculty members at Bethel gave me something worth cherishing forever; and I feel that the courses I pursued gave me a wider and better understanding for my work and my living. It is my sincere hope that my tiny atom which went to make up the whole of Bethel reflected only credit upon her name. May the school continue to radiate the same kind of service rays and may you, Dr. Kliever, find a larger sphere of helpful service than you have ever known before.

With best wishes from

A lover of Bethel,
Josie Perkins

Manhattan, Kansas

May, 1932

Dear Alumni Secretary:

Dr. Kliever has undoubtedly during his administration felt more concern for the welfare of Bethel College than any other one man. And few men could have taken that responsibility with the equanimity and magnanimity which characterizes Dr. Kliever. His quiet dignity is almost proverbial among Bethelites. His tact and cautious foresight has won for him the confidence of the conservatives; his open-mindedness, his insight, and sound judgment have won for him the confidence of friends everywhere.

Selma Rich Platt

Newton, Kansas

May, 1932

Dear Alumni Secretary:

AN APPRECIATION

It has been my privilege to be at Bethel College for six years during the time that Dr. Kliewer was President—one year as student and five years as teacher. During this time I have learned to respect and love him, and I deeply appreciate the services he has rendered to Bethel College.

I shall never forget his inspirational chapel talks and his sympathetic contact with students and teachers. Those personal visits in the office were always helpful.

We are very glad to know that Dr. Kliewer will remain with us and be the pastor of the Bethel College Church. We are looking forward to the messages he is going to give us from time to time.

Sincerely,
A. J. Regier

Reedley, California
May 18, 1932

My Dear Dr. Kliewer:

Just twenty years ago I finished my college work at Bethel and you finished your first year as President of the school. I have always been proud of the fact that you signed my college diploma. Your calm temperament even under vexing conditions has always inspired me. Bethel has had a steady and healthy growth during the twenty-one years since you first became her leader, and we know very well that your thoughtful and intelligent, yet calm and patient leadership, through years of strife and turmoil have made this possible.

We are happy that even after your retirement as President you will continue to remain in close touch with Bethel. Mrs. Regier joins me in invoking God's richest blessings upon you in your future services—still for Bethel.

Very sincerely,
J. M. Regier

Bentley, Kansas
May, 1932

Dear Alumni Secretary:

We shall always consider it a privilege to have been students at Bethel while it was under the direction of Dr. Kliewer. His presence was an inspiration; his words of counsel were filled with wisdom. His poise and dignity commanded our respect; his kindness has endeared his name to our memory.

Sincerely,
Hulda Rich
Willis E. Rich

Plains, Kansas
May, 1932

Dear Alumni Secretary:

Thank God for strong Christian leaders! Dr. Kliever's influence will ever remain with us who have had the privilege of attending Bethel College under his administration.

Anton S. Richert

Newton, Kansas
May, 1932

Dear Alumni Secretary:

A WORD OF GRATITUDE

To him

Who through his thorough appreciation of science, music, art, and letters, and

To him

Who by his openmindedness, broadness of vision, self-sacrifice, and unassuming leadership has, in many years of faithful service, brought to a realization the dream of our fathers—an accredited senior college.

D. H. Richert

Goessel, Kansas
May 17, 1932

Dear Alumni Secretary:

Considering the uphill work of the denominational colleges these days, I believe that Dr. Kliever has done exceptionally well as President of Bethel College.

An outstanding fruit of his services is the fine crop of teachers Bethel has produced for the church and state under his guidance and influence.

He has also done much toward friendly relations between the college and the city of Newton.

I have also appreciated very much that his personal testimony on matters of faith has been free from attacks on the reliability of the Scriptures. This has been a great blessing to the school, the church, and missions.

Sincerely yours,
P. H. Richert

Newton, Kansas
May, 1932

Dear Dr. Kliever:

IN APPRECIATION

Your clarity of thought guides the thinking of others;
Your high standards influence those who hear you speak;
Your appreciation of beauty makes glad the hearts of your
friends;

Your broad sympathies are a light in the community.

In grateful appreciation of your contributions in the
past and in happy anticipation of your spiritual leadership in
the future,

Helene Riesen

Chicago, Illinois
May 19, 1932

Dear Dr. Kliever:

It is with great joy that we pen these few words of
appreciation for your splendid services rendered as president
of Bethel College. You have unselfishly and at all times given
the best you had to Bethel, to us students, the Mennonite work
in general, and the world. Patiently you carried the burdens
placed upon your shoulders, in spite of criticism you moved
forward for God and man, your words were carefully weighed,
and your work was conscientiously done. We are sorry to
hear you have resigned, but no doubt it is for a greater Bethel
and humanity.

May we assure you that the torch you kept burning
ever before our eyes has caused us to trim our lamps, and with
God's help we, too, shall move on for God and humanity.

The path may be winding, the road may be rough,
The burden so heavy, the people so gruff;
Sometimes so discouraged, sometimes very blue,
Sometimes even worried, but what shall we do?
With uplifted spirit as Jesus has done
We'll just keep on going; we'll soon see the sun;
We'll just keep on praying; we'll do and we'll dare;
With Jesus as our Guide, God'll answer our prayer.

—E D. S.

May God keep you and bless you is our prayer.

Yours in the Maser's service,
Edward D. Schmidt
Ella Lichti Schmidt

Plains, Kansas
May 20, 1932

Dear Alumni Secretary:

Dr. Kliewer has helped me to see the real value in living a life of service to God and to man.

Sincerely,
Ted Schmidt

Wichita, Kansas
May 18, 1932

Dear Dr. Kliewer:

The work that you have accomplished during your connection with Bethel College will be felt not only in the Mennonite church in our country for many years but will also direct individuals in their many walks of life.

I, for one, realize that the "Bethel spirit" has influenced my life very definitely. You have had a large part in creating the "Bethel spirit."

Sincerely yours,
P. Daniel Schultz

Wichita, Kansas
May, 1932

Dear Alumni Secretary:

A FEW WORDS IN APPRECIATION OF DR. J. W. KLIEWER

In thinking back over the period of time that Dr. J. W. Kliewer has given to Bethel College, one cannot help but feel that the college and the community have been and still are the beneficiaries of the deeds of a man of constructive thought and most purposeful action.

While it is true that other great and noble-thinking people have helped in the building of Bethel College, it seems that Dr. Kliewer has met with a distinct success in putting Bethel on the right track. The fact that Dr. Kliewer was instrumental in securing for Bethel the best faculty that the school ever had, is no small contribution. It is only too bad that at times ulterior and extremely selfish-thinking people thwarted the plans of Dr. Kliewer. But the very fact that Bethel is again moving in the direction of obtaining the kind of teaching force that a college should have is the best evidence that Dr. Kliewer was right.

There are other things one could say, but in so far as it takes thinking people to do things, we feel that the greatest

contribution that Dr. Kliever has given and still is giving to Bethel is the fact that his efforts always have been and still are indicative of definite accomplishments. As a result of his most constructive work, many of us have been benefited by his activities as well as by the instruction of men whom Dr. Kliever from time to time secured for Bethel.

That the work of Dr. Kliever may even be more effective in the future than it has been in the past is the sincere wish of

Mr. and Mrs. Wm. A. Schroeder

Goessel, Kansas
May, 1932

Dear Alumni Secretary:

The name of John Walter Kliever shall be remembered by our Mennonite folk. The services he has rendered to Bethel College cannot be measured in dollars and cents. A man of noble character and ideals has inspired young men and women to ideals of Christian living. As head of the institution he sought the good of the institution, and although some disagreed with him, he stood the test.

Daniel S. Thiesen

Halstead, Kansas
May, 1932

Dear Alumni Secretary:

A WORD OF APPRECIATION

I well remember the contacts I made with Dr. J. W. Kliever during my student years. At that time he impressed me as a man of deep and sincere faith who was sure of his God. I soon discovered his love and tact and his ability to lead growing minds into an intellectual reasonableness which gave them religious freedom together with certainty of God.

I was then in a stage of life marked by confused theology. Step by step Dr. Kliever led me, through clear logic and clear interpretation, on, until I came to the dawn of new and richer and deeper meaning of the Christian life. His quiet dignity and courtesy and regard for personality at once made me respect him as an instructor.

I shall always treasure the memory of my college days because it gave me the privilege of sitting at Dr. Kliever's feet. There the ministry of the Gospel, as well as the Christian life were made attractive to me. May God grant

that his influence may bless our Alma Mater in the future as in the past.

Sincerely,
H. T. Unruh

Escondido, California
May, 1932

Dear Dr. Kliever:

A TOKEN OF REMEMBRANCE

When I think of Bethel days one leading personality has meant so much to me that I can unhesitatingly say I believe he has followed closely the exhortation of Paul in II Tim. 2:15, where he says, "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."

Best wishes to you, Dr. Kliever, with Daniel 12:3, "And they that be wise (or teachers) shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever."

Loving greetings from
H. D. Voth

Chicago, Illinois
May, 1932

Dear Alumni Secretary:

IN APPRECIATION OF DR. J. W. KLIEWER

Dr. J. W. Kliever has been an inspiration to us. His personal contacts which we have experienced and his public efforts which we have witnessed were always pleasantly constructive.

His dignity, so intimately a part of his fine personality, graced his many endeavors with which he served not only the individual life but the whole student body of Bethel College, the Mennonite Church, and the state.

His considerate and kindly interest in our trivial, personal problems as students stirs our admiration. His continued thought about our present welfare as alumni of Bethel College demands our best efforts to follow his noble example.

Paul D. Voth
Selma Graber Voth

Goessel, Kansas
May, 1932

Dear Alumni Secretary:

MY APPRECIATION OF THE WORK OF DR. J. W. KLIEWER
IN CONNECTION WITH BETHEL COLLEGE

It has been my privilege to take a course in Bible entitled "Old Testament Heroes" under Dr. Kliewer when attending Bethel. I always enjoyed the hours spent in this class. I was also enrolled in the catechism class taught by Dr. Kliewer. Since I could not go home every Sunday to attend the class in my home church, I certainly appreciated the privilege of taking the catechism class at Bethel. I shall never forget Dr. Kliewer's kind interest in the questions and problems of the individuals of that class.

As college president Dr. Kliewer's dignity, his calmness, and his tact in dealing with individuals have greatly impressed the students. So often at the annual corporation meeting Dr. Kliewer saved the situation. In a critical moment when everyone was excited, he would arise and explain things in a calm and clarifying way. His careful explanations and keen judgment of the problems confronting our school always had a good influence on the constituency of Bethel College. It was with a feeling of regret that I heard of his resignation from the presidency of Bethel College.

I am grateful for all that he has done for our school; the unselfish service rendered, the many sacrifices and the numerous trips which he made for the welfare of Bethel College.

Katie Wedel

Moundridge, Kansas
May, 1932

Dear Alumni Secretary:

A TRIBUTE TO DR. J. W. KLIEWER

In my mind Dr. Kliewer is one of the great pillars in our Mennonite Conference. Through the medium of the college he has influenced the Mennonite youth to the highest ideals of life. Because of his keen foresight and tactful diplomacy, a virtue most needed in our day in dealing with people, he has been able to hold the constituency of our college together remarkably well and has steered our educational institution (Bethel College) on to a praiseworthy level in the face of many adverse circumstances. May God grant that his influence shall be carried onward as he fills the various responsible positions in God's great vineyard.

Fraternally,
Phil. A. Wedel

Los Angeles, California

May, 1932

Dear Friend:

Your career does not mean Bethel days only for me; it goes back to the kindergarten background of Bethel at Halstead.

It was in the Primary German School there, when you probably did some of your practice teaching, that you passed the highest of recommendations, from a child's standpoint, which plays a very important part.

It was an honor to have had you as a boarder in the family circle, although it was a bit hard for a timid, bashful girl to sit at the same table with her austere school teacher, fearing that school behavior might be discussed.

Through your influence as a teacher, pastor, and friend I have gained much.

Bethel College has been fortunate in having had you as its president; may the Lord bless you as you continue to work in other fields.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Wirkler

CHAPTER XI

IN RESPONSE

Bethel College, Newton, Kansas
June 24, 1932

Dear Friend:

You are one of the considerable number of friends who aided in the composition of the book entitled "In Appreciation" and so kindly presented to me at the Bethel Alumni Banquet on June 2.

I prize all these expressions of appreciation very highly, but I must regretfully confess that I do not discover myself as in possession of all the virtues mentioned in the book, at least not to that full degree that is indicated, I see if I want to live up to the reputation established for me by this book, I shall have a big program ahead of me. Of course, not many will know the whole content of the book.

The many fine sentiments expressed in the book shall ever be an incentive to me to try, with the help of God, to fill in the details that will make the portrait for which "In Appreciation" furnishes brush, colors, and canvas. I want to learn to say with Joseph Yates Peek:

I would be true, for there are those who trust me;
I would be pure, for there are those who care;
I would be strong, for there is much to suffer;
I would be brave, for there is much to dare.

I would be friend of all—the foe the friendless;
I would be giving, and forget the gift;
I would be humble, for I know my weakness;
I would look up, and laugh, and love, and lift.

If ever I succeed in reaching that goal of character perfection, even only in a measure, I know your words of appreciation will have assisted me.

Gratefully yours,
J. W. Kliever

CHAPTER XII

OBITUARY OF J. W. KLIEWER

John W. Kliewer, son of John P. and Aganetha Foth Kliewer, was born in the German Mennonite community Michalin, in the Kiev region of Russian Poland, June 8, 1869. In the year 1874, his parents with their entire family joined other Mennonite families and migrated from Poland to Kansas, locating about ten miles east of Newton. Here, amid pioneer conditions and struggles, young John grew up and attended public schools and the Newton city schools.

As a young man he accepted the Lord Jesus Christ as his Saviour and united with the Mennonite Church in which church he was active for about fifty years. For several years he attended the Mennonite Seminary in Halstead, graduating in 1890. During the Nineties he taught in rural schools, in the Halstead city schools, and one year in Bethel Academy. He also studied at the newly founded Bethel College, and later at Garrett Biblical Institute in Evanston, Illinois, where he graduated in 1901. Later, in 1925, the same institution conferred upon him the honorary degree of Doctor of Divinity. In the same year Bluffton College also honored him with the same degree.

From 1901 to 1903 he was pastor in Wadsworth, Ohio, and for eight years in Berne, Indiana. During this time he established his own home, being united in marriage with Emma Ruth of Halstead, in 1902. While attending the Mennonite General Conference in 1908, he was elected a member of the Foreign Mission Board, and continued as such for twenty-seven years, most of the time serving as President of this board.

In 1911, Reverend Kliever became president of Bethel College, and a year later also pastor of the Bethel College Church. He served in this double capacity until 1920, when he resigned as president of the college and was granted a leave of absence by the church. For a year he traveled, visiting Mennonite missions in China and India, and Mennonite churches in Europe.

Upon his return from this World Tour, he resumed his work as pastor of the Bethel College Church, but not for long. In 1925 the Board of Directors asked him to again become president of Bethel College. He accepted this call reluctantly, because he preferred preaching to college administrative work, and because he believed that the College Board should seek a younger man. Nevertheless, he faithfully directed the college administration for seven trying years, from 1925 to 1932, when he resigned as president. He was chosen pastor by the College church, and for a few months preached with joy and power until October, 1932, when he suffered a stroke. He recovered sufficiently to again take up his preaching duties, but never regained his former vigorous health. Early in 1935, his beloved wife passed away and a few months later he gave up his pastoral duties. During the last few years he lived

in retirement, writing his Memories. After this was completed he felt that his work was done and expectantly looked forward to the time when he would be called home. This call came February 9, 1938, at which time he had reached the age of sixty-eight years, eight months, and one day.

He is survived by his children, Ruth and husband, Dr. H. S. Liebenberg of Wilmington, California; Karl and wife of Topeka, and Paul and wife of Newton. One brother and three sisters also survive: Rev. H. J. Kliever of Newton, Mrs. Mary Schmidt of Newton, Mrs. Agnes Ewert of Drake, Sask., and Mrs. J. H. Harms of Cordell, Oklahoma. Besides these are many friends, colleagues, ex-students, and others, who feel that his passing is their loss. His unselfish devotion to the cause of Christ and the Church has been a source of inspiration to many, who today thank God for the life which has just come to a close.

Funeral services at the home, College chapel, and cemetery were in charge of his pastor, Rev. J. N. Smucker, assisted by Dr. E. G. Kaufman, Rev. P. H. Richert, Rev. J. F. Moyer, and Rev. C. F. Hartmann.

